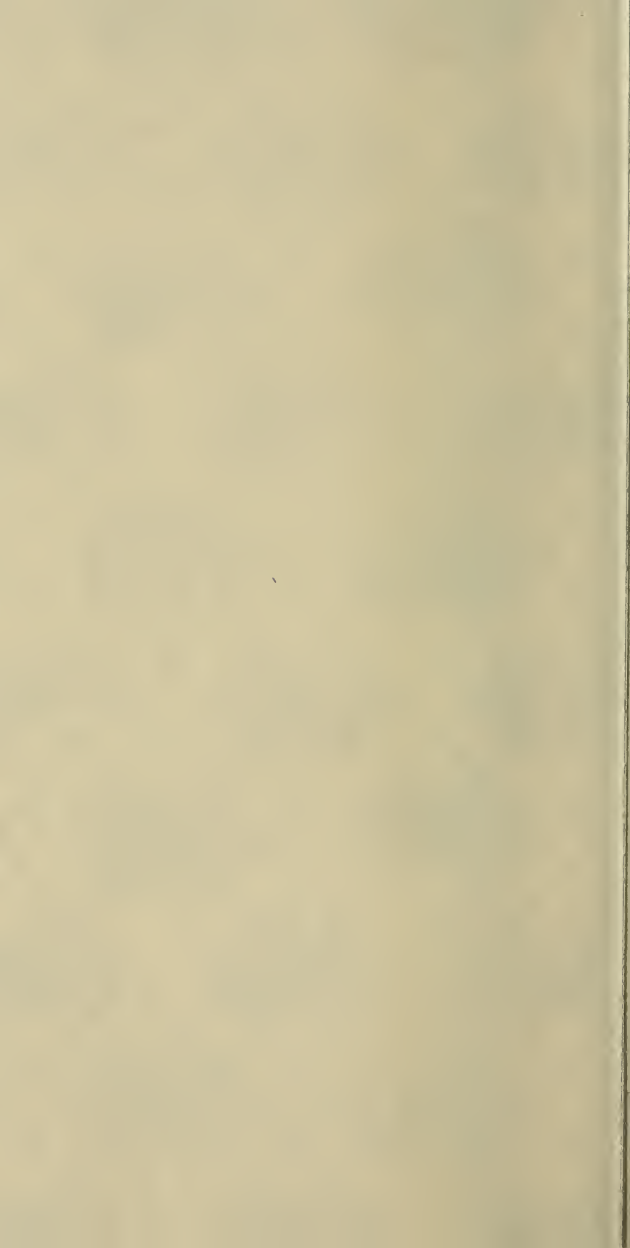
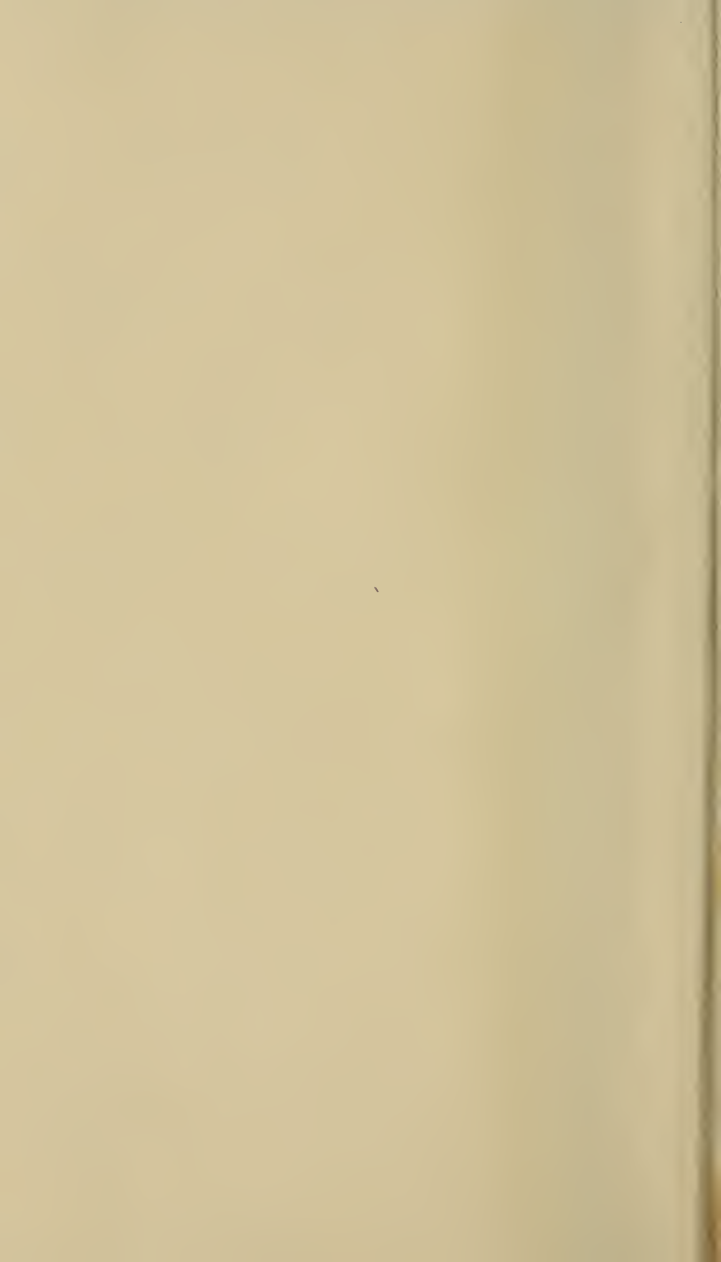










AS IT IS TO BE

BY

CORA LINN DANIELS

AUTHOR OF "THE BRONZE BUDDHA" AND "SARDIA"

SIXTH THOUSAND

BOSTON
LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY

1900

50022

Library of Congress
TWO COPIES RECEIVED
SEP 21 1900
Copyright entry
Sept. 21, 1900
No. *923454*.....
SECOND COPY.
Delivered to
ORDER DIVISION,
OCT 13 1900

BF1999
I25
1900

Copyright, 1892, 1900,

BY CORA LINN DANIELS.

All rights reserved.

UNIVERSITY PRESS . JOHN WILSON
AND SON • CAMBRIDGE, U.S.A.

DEDICATION

I Dedicate this Work to You

MAY YOU ENJOY AND SPREAD JOY ALL THE DAYS
OF YOUR LIFE

C. L. D.



CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
HOW THE NARRATIVE BEGAN	1
The Philosopher. The Spiritualist. The Thinker. The Physician. The Religionist. The Reader. The Voices. The first step. English language. Telegraph. Foreign countries. India. Human beings. A living friend. Voices of spirits. Subtle difference.	

CHAPTER II.

THE PROCESS OF DYING	7
Contemplation. Death. Peace. Pure light. Infinite content. Faces. Laughter. Rising upwards. Becoming changed. No change of individuality. Opening of spiritual consciousness. The walls of Heaven. Location of Heaven. Near and far at once. Instantaneous communication. Illustration.	

CHAPTER III.

LIGHT AND SPEED	15
Light unlike anything known. A blazing star. Hearing at a distance of millions of miles. Instantaneous journey from a star. Immortal thought. Eating in Heaven. Intensity of life. A spirit's feat. A spirit at the theatre. Startling sympathy. Communication before death. An intangible grasp. Astonishing phenomena. Throwing the spirit to a distance. An absent spirit. Do spirits suffer? Human sorrow vain. Life like a broken toy. Ideas assume form.	

Contents

CHAPTER IV.

PAGE

THE LAW OF ATTRACTION 25

Gentle reproaches. Spirits have no power to seek those who do not desire them. The law of mutual attraction. Magnetic currents. Attention a prime element of spiritual law. Will.

CHAPTER V.

EVIL AND PURITY 28

A point in morals. No evil in spirit life. Illustration of the parable of the ten talents. The symbol of a pure soul.

CHAPTER VI.

SENSES OF SPIRIT 31

Spirits on approaching earth do not necessarily assume human form. Mortals could not recognize a spirit in the spiritual form. Spirits have senses and perceptions. Spiritual senses magnified infinitely. Spiritual sense of touch. Universal knowledge. Cognizance of whatever attracts attention. Studies of the spiritual life. More than five senses. New senses. Reason is absolute. Spiritual knowledge without doubt. The telescopic and microscopic eye. Hearing by the law of attraction. Dominion of spirit over matter. The life of spirit depends upon conscious Will. The new name. The difference between human and spiritual language radical. A language of facts. A spiritual laugh. St. John intensely intuitive.

CHAPTER VII.

OUR CONDITIONS AND SURROUNDINGS AFTER DEATH 45

Spirit dictation. A community perishes. What their condition? Children enter a land of unspeakable beauty. Heaven's gate not shut to any soul. Progression in spirit life instantaneous. Goodness and eternal life joy in them-

Contents

PAGE

selves. Evil, properly, not a malignant force. Definition too sweeping. No spiritual evil. Evil elemental. Punishment. Annihilation of opportunities and joys. No soul left helpless. Time of no account. Who was the Christ? "My Father and I are One," illustrated. A spiritual home. The garment of immortality.

CHAPTER VIII.

IDEA-FACTS 59

Interruption of converse. The issues of life and death. Material the manifestation of idea. God's practicality. The play of Almighty intellect. Personal entity a fact, with or without form. Human life based on expression. An intuitive experiment. Expressing an idea-fact. Carried to the Infinite. No heavenly maps or drawings. Reciprocal action of spirit and universe. Ideas are eternal. Time the sign-manual of human ignorance. Seating ourselves on the crown of a sun. Goodness the key to spiritualistic power.

CHAPTER IX.

SCIENTIFIC SPIRITUALISM AND HEAVENLY POW- ERS 72

When the spirit enters an infant. Material a cobweb. Penetrating the veil. Normal conditions. Intensest passions easiest to manipulate. Communication between spirits and men. Millions of believers. Scientific spiritualism. Production of life. Life a mysterious force. Nature yields to a general law. One's standing in spirit life. Right for its own sake. Rewards. The "many mansions." The relationships of the heart. What is mind without form? Choice of a palace or a cottage a matter of will. All past ages from which to select. A permeating light. Breathing life. Home in every place at once. Kindly attentions to weakness and ignorance. The crown of goodness. The naturalist. The astronomer. The historian. The statesman. A dual unit. The spirit of our mate. Male and female mingled in one.

Contents

CHAPTER X.	PAGE
WHAT IS UNCONSCIOUS WILL?	90

An explanation demanded. Conscious and unconscious will. The invisible life of your own spirit. The spirit flees away intact. Presentiments. The senses of the spirit infinitely fine. What is intuition? Illustration of unconscious will. The eternal idea. Application of eternal significance to observation. Prayer dominates invisible forces.

CHAPTER XI.	
MORTAL MIND	98

Will and imagination. A strange communication. Emanations. Ghosts. Magnetism. The effects of mind. The Black Magician. Obsession.

CHAPTER XII.	
PUNISHMENT	107

Reading in Heaven. Memory absolutely perfect. The Alexandrian library. A royal road for a royal child. The "out" of Heaven. A germ. A rare spiritual phenomenon. Punishment of the wicked. An eye for an eye. Natural punishment. An unsafe doctrine. Torment for torment. The universal sheriff. The punishment of Napoleon. Memory and contrast. Spiritual ignorance. Ignorance is not wicked. The sun of righteousness. The indestructible germ. Blotting out sin. Years of probation. Atonement on earth best. The task is not hopeless. This is all the hell there is. A Christian mother and wicked son. Does the angel suffer? Comfort beyond words. The "great gulf fixed." It is a fable. The Testament compilers bungling. No value in morals. No separation of place or portion. The Voice has lived in heaven a thousand years. There is no hell. There is no everlasting punishment. Jesus not necessarily infallible. The Almighty veil. Christians should be modest.

Contents

CHAPTER XIII.

PAGE

SPIRITS DO NOT TEMPT—THE CELESTIAL BODY 131

A morphine eater renewing his vice. An invisible appetite. Liars and hypocrites. An insult to man's moral nature. Christ a magnetic healer. No fear of intrusive spirits. The celestial body. Do young people retain their youth? The current of Heavenly will. The change in us brings a desire for a change in our friends. The development like that of a rose. No disappointment in the land of satisfaction.

CHAPTER XIV.

OPPOSING CREEDS 137

Jarring sects. The Calvinist. The Methodist and the Roman Catholic. All go to the same place. Love shows the vanity of dogma. A simple creed. The overwhelming No! The Heavenly creed. Worship of the highest ideal. Christ still active. The Christ still able to atone. The Word in 1892. The name in Arabia. No savage neglected, forgotten, or despised. Goodness! Goodness the universal name. The higher goodness.

CHAPTER XV.

THE DUAL UNIT 145

The Heavenly union. Individuality intact. Each absorbs the other. God's secrets. Mismatching. The criminal code. The union of genius with unappreciation. Advantage to the man. Advantage to the woman. Mutual advantage. A rule that should work both ways. Conscientious and earnest love of God.

CHAPTER XVI.

A CURIOUS EXPERIENCE—ELEMENTARIES . . 151

A strange vision. A critical comment. No struggle. A rare phenomenon. A wholly unexpected explanation.

Contents

PAGE

Elementaries. Immortal, but not human. Its use. The life principle of the brute creation. Nothing is ever lost. Renewed friendship with animals. To will from the mass into the individual. No individual resurrection of animals. God's infinite solicitude.

CHAPTER XVII.

RE-INCARNATION — CHILDISH AGE 161

Re-incarnation. Is it possible there is such a thing? Re-incarnation of spiritual thought through a material medium. The Oriental less spiritual than the Occidental. Does goodness alone claim the highest Heavenly reward? Growth rapid, according to harmony of intellect and morality. Ambition for perfection the flower of knowledge. Heaven enjoyed according to each one's capacity. An entity attains individuality by means of an individual fleshly form. No necessity for re-incarnation. A description of the idea of Karma. The soul never lapses into the general mass. Why man was born. The essence of God illustrated by a crystal ball. The childishness of age illustrated. The spirits of the aged who "have lost their minds," leave the body. Testimony of my grandfather. Is there any relief from the shrinking from death? A beautiful answer. The star of eternal life. The body and the spirit in a constant struggle. Nothing can disturb the spirit. Enjoy and spread joy.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MUSIC, ART, AND MEMORY 183

Music in heaven. No instruments. Can spirits compose and play music? No such word as "ungratified." Music in Heaven is thought. Uttering one's self in violin tones. No need of implements. Thought takes form. Thinking a statue into form. Artistic utterance permanent. Mathematical morality. The will of the observer the focusing point. A prophetic bugbear. Must our hidden histories

Contents

PAGE

be read? An unjust proceeding. Sin, struggle, temptation, error, no part of spirit life. The protection of silence. Still more beautiful protections in spirit. Obedience a necessity and a desire. God sets the fashions. Visible advantage the result of all acts. We go as a whole, not in parts. The million daily drops of vicissitude. God helps. A diamond illustration. Punishment a beneficence. Memory the birth-gift of earth.

CHAPTER XIX.

FEAR 201

Fear is in its nature harmless. No "evil" an evil until abused. A new and unwonted freedom. Fear deals with the future. Religious fear an evil. The privilege of fear. Business fear. Fear of sickness. We can control forces by courage. Imparting vitality. The spirit is crushed in a person who fears. God's arm right around you. Victory! Rational courage is power. Each thought an invisible influence. Sending out a strong force for good.

CHAPTER XX.

ASTROLOGY 213

Astrology. Planets do not affect individual destiny. Successful predictions more than counterbalanced by unsuccessful ones. The mind warped and biased by astrology. Such superstition beneath an immortal intellect. Reincarnation false. Correct predictions not done by means of astrology. An explanation. Will Venus make a poet, or Mars a soldier? The craving to know the future. Illustration of the fallibility of astrology. The secret wish. A Bermudian prediction. A shrewd reader of character.

CHAPTER XXI.

PROVIDENCE 224

Invisible compensations. Has prayer any effect? To will is often to accomplish. Human life infinitely varied.

Contents

PAGE

Prayer an effort of the will. Exceptional providences. No such thing as especial providences. No direct interposition. Providences only applicable to material. The keynote of earthly prosperity. Miracles. }

CHAPTER XXII.

THOUGHT 240

Various beliefs as to what the Voices are. I do not answer my own questions. Thought. The Voices will impress the world. A shell endowed with God's thought. Space a place of confusion. A dead body goes into apparent nothingness. Sifting a motive. Is unuttered thought a force? No general association of ideas. Can we prove the meaning of thought? Projecting one's self. Strata of thought. Will thinking riches bring riches? Strataic thought forces. Evil thoughts cause war, revolts, and crimes. Massed thought. Silent thought influences all. A fresh breeze. How did the Christ heal the sick? Christ healed by obedience to natural law. The spirit has no ear for evil. Spirits cannot respond to evil desires. Are spirits disturbed by mortal influences? Defiance of all natural conditions. We may explore the world as spirits. A travelling party. Plunging into the centre of the earth. The mandate of love.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE GOD-SOUL OF MAN 259

Especial care for God's children. You are God. No selfhood out of God. Many spirits have disappeared. Spirits as gods. Every soul shall be perfect at last. Is there a second death? The queen-mother. The realm of divine holiness. A wall like precious stones.

Contents

CHAPTER XXIV.

PAGE

THE DRAMA — A DAY IN HEAVEN 265

Memory. Evolution of elements. Some planets are inhabited. Planets differ in glory. The human mind must discover material facts. The transcendent genius of men. One spirit a living link. Education in spiritual law. Scientific data. A satisfactory mission. Poetry, romance, and affection. The drama. Dramatists and actors. Actors act their own souls. A stage murder. To mortals death is the tragedy of tragedies. Interesting situations. Plots of facts. The supreme moment of love. The spiritual canvas. Evil disciplinary and remedial. Work out your own salvation. A strong stepping-stone. The negatives of Heaven. We shall be strong. The kernel of character. Growth and unfolding. Evil blotted out. Opera, oratorio, and orchestra in Heaven. The envious clock. Intercourse and society in Heaven. The shadow of desired privacy. Delightful occupations. Day is infinite sight. Added powers. Farewell.

AS IT IS TO BE

THE VOICES: A STATEMENT OF FACT

CHAPTER I

HOW THE NARRATIVE BEGAN

THE following narrative of what has now become a matter of intensest interest to me, will probably be set down by most people as a work of the imagination; by others, as a superstitious piece of nonsense; and by a few as a singular history of unusual phenomena. The philosopher, not finding anything infallible in it, may shrug his shoulders in disgust; the spiritualist, already prone to believe his very shadow is a ghost, will accept it with eager ears; the thinker will theorize on the possibility of psychometric impression; the physician will speculate upon the state of the stomach, the nervous system, and the circulation; the nar-

As It is to Be

row religionist will declare it to be wholly of the devil; and my reader, who, I hope, is intelligent, poetic, and comprehensive, may admit the truth, at least, of the story itself as actually happening, or seeming to happen, to me in the following way and order. I begin the description of the Voices without knowing or dreaming how it will end; for in beginning I feel that I have only taken the first step, and they only know where they mean to lead me, or how far.

Throughout my life since I was about twenty years old, I have occasionally heard what I called Voices speaking to me. These Voices are distinct to my consciousness as a human voice, yet I realize that they make no sound. They speak in the English language, but I have often heard them speak a very decided brogue, a Scotch idiom, once in a great while some language I could not understand, and very often upon subjects with which I had nothing whatever to do, and with which I could not have any possible connection. I first began to notice these Voices as

How the Narrative Began

a sort of dual consciousness. I would be thinking in my own words, when I would suddenly stop short and listen to what was being said besides my own thoughts — just as if a telegraph operator should be sending a message and still listening to those which were being sent over the wires to her.

If I was in New York I often seemed to hear the most laughable conversations going on between two Irishwomen, or between persons evidently of the lower classes ; and I have often smiled at the exhibitions of human nature so unconsciously made to me. Again, I have heard conversations evidently not going on in this country at all, and while listening to them I would frequently get so strong an impression of the speaker that I could actually see him.

At one time I saw a young and an elderly military man, each dressed in English military undress, with cork travelling-hats covered with white canvas and wrapped with blue silk veils, talking to each other, as one lit a cigar and the other leaned against a big rock

As It is to Be

in the sultry sunshine of a day in India. They seemed near Bombay, but in the country, and they were discussing some project connected with the Khedive of Egypt. This was some years ago, but these Voices, talking of a thousand things, acted in my consciousness as if I were a telegraph-wire over which constant messages flowed ; and while I could often feel that they were going on, and sometimes get quite a consecutive bit, if I fully realized and tried to listen to them, I would, by the mere act of concentrating my attention, seem to stop the message, and I would lose the sequel of what was being done or said.

So far, I distinctly recognized the Voices as those of human beings still living on the earth. In many cases I have communed with absent friends, feeling conscious, and afterwards ascertaining, that their thoughts were upon me at that very time. In one instance, while in the night, the Voice of one whom I dearly cared for seemed for a long time to converse with me. This led me to infer

How the Narrative Began

that at times our spirits do leave our bodies, both when those bodies are awake and when asleep; for we go on, mechanically performing our accustomed affairs, while our minds or spirits are far, far away, occupied with others. As time went on, I noticed a change in the Voices. They now impressed me as being the voices of spirits who had passed out of the body into the immortal life. Many and long have been my inward conversations with these spirits (if they be spirits), who have told me many wonderful things — things that it does not seem to me I could possibly imagine.

To describe how I can converse in my mind with the Voices without getting mixed up, is difficult. Of course, if I ask a question or make a remark I wait for a reply, as in any ordinary conversation. Many might think that my imagination dictated these replies quite as much as it dictated the questions. But there is a strong and subtle difference — just as strong as is the difference between your own speech and that of some one else.

As It is to Be

Besides this, I am by no means confined to *tête-à-tête*. Many talk one after another.

It was, perhaps, about two years ago when the spirit Voices became occasionally familiar in conversing with me, and if I was "blue" or unhappy, many were the cheerful words they said. But it was not until the autumn of 188— that I began to have such definite communications that I listened in astonishment. About that time a very dear friend died in a foreign country, and I at once was told that the Voices had an especial work for me to do. They also intimated that I was to be relieved of trouble and anxiety to so great an extent that nothing should materially interfere with this work. As it is now three years later, I may interpolate here that my life has run in an even current ever since. I have been at ease mentally and physically for the past period as I had not been for years.

CHAPTER II

THE PROCESS OF DYING

VERY much happened to me that absolutely precluded conversation with the Voices until the winter set in and I was frequently alone in my chamber, often about dusk, before dinner, when, not yet having had the gas lighted, the dull glow from the coals sent out a gleam into the darkness. I had a fancy to sit so, thinking of many things, often attaining a state of quiet adoration of Him who had afflicted me, and yet who so gently drew my mind from a sorrowful to a cheerful contemplation of both past and future. The soul in solitude and silence often invites harmonious conditions which never obtain in the society of people nor in the daylight. It is possible that unseen beings can then approach more closely to

As It is to Be

human environments or speak with a more potent effect in reaching the mind.

It was then that I became aware of the apparent presence of that friend who had recently died ; and while I did not really dare to believe it was he, yet I could but hope it was that manly and noble and true soul, which could never do or say aught but what would be wholly honest and good. In a mental tremble of hope, doubt, and fear, I finally assumed to my own mind that the Voice was sometimes his that now spoke to me, and I ventured to ask him of himself.

“Tell me,” said I, “if you are allowed to do so, what death is like.”

“It is a natural process,” said the Voice, “like birth, and like birth is an unconscious one. Being unconscious, it is painless and utterly devoid of fear, and being natural, goes on of its own accord without help or hindrance of the person. Shall I describe to you what my own death was like ? You are correct in using the word ‘death,’ from which spiritualists shrink ; that is the name of the

The Process of Dying

process, and might as well be used as any other. Well, then, when I died I was in no pain and had no fear. For some time during my illness I had been rebellious; I did not wish to die. I was in the prime of manhood, and I could not seem to bring myself to admit the righteousness of it. But as time went on and I approached my death, I became more and more resigned, until I was at peace and even happy.

“The moment of the actual separation of my spirit from my body is an absolute blank to me; I know nothing about it. Of what happened to me after the time when I drew my last conscious breath on earth, I cannot say one word. When I awoke, however, to consciousness here, it was the same kind of consciousness to which I had been accustomed. I felt that I was I, and I knew myself and what I was about. My first sensation was of light, pure light. This light was different from any of which I had been cognizant. It was brilliant in the extreme, more brilliant than any light I could have imagined, and yet

As It is to Be

it did not dazzle or annoy me. The whole surrounding atmosphere seemed nothing but pure light, in which was no form, no line, no object of any kind.

“My other sensations were those of infinite content, rest, and peace. I seemed to be fully satisfied ; I wanted nothing. I must have remained thus, bathing and basking in pure light, for some time. But at last I saw, approaching me out of the glow, some faces. They were faces I knew — my mother, father, and many friends. As they approached I saw their bodies also. They greeted me with smiles, happy speeches, and delightful welcomes, each vying to attract my attention and each saying some pretty or affectionate thing, with laughter and happiness beaming from every eye and lip. In a little while I felt myself rising. My friends had formed a group like a half-circle, and were moving back and up, their faces still turned to me, and each doing his or her best to attract my attention. They succeeded in doing so, for I was constantly replying to them, yet at the same time I was conscious that just

The Process of Dying

as fast as they rose backward and up I was drawn lightly after them, without any volition of my own.

“We seemed to move for an immense distance at an immense speed, and as we did so I began to notice a gradual change in all the forms and faces. The farther we proceeded, the more radiant and beautiful they became. They began to scintillate colors, throwing out rays of many hues, and becoming so changed that had I seen them in that way at first, I should never have recognized them, for they were angelic and exquisitely radiant, and beautiful beyond all language. They were utterly different from what they were on earth, and from what they were when I first saw them. Yet strange to say, they each kept their individuality intact. I knew each perfectly and could not mistake them, any more than you can mistake your mother; and yet they did not look like anything I had ever seen.

“By this I was taught that as we enter more and more the spiritual state, our spiritual con-

As It is to Be

sciousness is opened. The more we throw off the earthly nature the more we become enlightened in things above it. We finally reached the walls of Heaven."

"The walls of Heaven!" I exclaimed; "does Heaven have a wall?"

"You would call it such," answered the Voice; "it is a boundary. One might as well call it a wall as anything, in your language."

"Well," I said, "if Heaven has a wall or boundary, it has location; therefore it is a place. I thought it was a state, not a place."

"It is both a state and a place," said the Voice. "At last we reached the state and place of 'Heaven,' as you call it, and when we entered in — I cannot tell you any more. I can only say that they who led me grew even more magnificent."

"If it is a place and has location, it must *be* somewhere," said I. "Is it millions and billions of miles away? Is it outside of our universe?"

"It is a great distance away as measured by

The Process of Dying

your miles, and at the same time it is not separated from earth at all. It is right around you at the same time that it is an immense distance off."

"How can that be?" I queried, nonplussed.

"Because the communication between Heaven and earth is literally instantaneous. There can be no separation of space where there is no separation of time; therefore, as there is no time and no space in the spirit world, a place can be away and near at the same moment. We are enveloped in an atmosphere which is instantaneous in communication between any points, and nothing can be said or done on earth that is not known at the same second in Heaven. You may say that I used the terms of time to describe what is no time; but how else can I convey to your mind the ideas that are expressed so differently here? There is a constant telegraphy, as it were; or I can illustrate it by saying that when you touch a flame with your finger you are almost instantly conscious of it in your brain, and so the material universe is felt in the

As It is to Be

spiritual universe, without the loss of the millionth part of a second."

"And you say it is a state as well as a place?"

"Yes, but of that I cannot speak, simply because no mortal can understand it. To know how we feel, you must become one of us."

CHAPTER III

LIGHT AND SPEED

THIS ended that chat, and it was some time before I had anything said to me of so astonishing a nature. Yet I frequently held communion with my invisible friends and became singularly accustomed to them. They seemed to become a part of all my thought.

I was speaking to the Voice of the light he had seen, and asked him what it was like. Was it like the sun, the moon, gas, electric, or what? The Voice assured me it would be impossible to describe it, since it was unlike anything his mortal eye had seen; yet, it was something like the soft flame of an Argand burner behind a porcelain shade, if one might imagine the flame multiplied a million times and the shade made of an opal.

“But it is so difficult to understand this instantaneous communication,” said I. “Do

As It is to Be

you mean to say that, if you were in Heaven and I should call you, you could be with me just as soon as I called, in actual presence, standing by my side?"

"Yes, I do."

At that moment I glanced out of the window. There was no light in my room, and the rosy glow from the fire was its only illumination. The moon was just rising, and beside her shone a brilliant star. Now, one of my ambitions is to be able to visit other worlds. I am in great hopes to be able to do so if ever I become a spirit, and on seeing this magnificent star blazing forth in its glory, I instantly questioned the Voice.

"Can you go in a moment anywhere you please? Can you go to that star?"

I think a moment elapsed before there came a reply, —

"Why, certainly I can."

"And were you standing on some eminence on yonder star, could you still speak to me so that I could hear you?"

"You hear me, don't you?" said the Voice.

Light and Speed

"Why, yes," I answered, somewhat surprised.

"Well, I am standing on the very star you pointed out. I came here before I answered you. Now, does n't this prove to you that there is neither time nor space in spirit? Don't you hear me and understand me as well as if I were beside you?"

"I confess I do!" I exclaimed.

"Well, I am beside you. I am touching you."

"What?"

"Certainly. How long does it take your thought to travel to that star? Not an instant. Well, spirit is even subtler and swifter than thought; for human thought is ever limited by its environment of flesh, and must act through it. Immortal thought is unhampered by anything material, and knows nothing of limitations."

"Tell me again about the light you first saw as you awoke," said I, persisting in one idea, it seemed so fascinating.

"It was a light so different from any

As It is to Be

material radiance that I cannot," the Voice answered patiently. "A man born blind may be told what light is like, but he can never really imagine it; so with you."

"Do you eat there?"

The Voice laughed. "If we please, for pleasure!"

"Then you are not obliged to?"

"No. We live in an atmosphere of life, nothing but life. There is no decay, no loss, no ruin, no fading, no lack, no sense of want of any description. The air we breathe is life, vibrant, pulsing, dominant, active, all-surrounding, all-sustaining, all-upholding. We cannot know pain or death, because it is the decay of the system that causes pain and death. We are always full in every part of intense life, and we exist in a state of joyous vitality."

"Then you can have no fear?"

"That is one of the sweetest things of our existence."

"Would you not be afraid to encounter a fire?" I asked earnestly.

Light and Speed

"I should pass right through it," said the Voice, in an amused tone.

"Pass through it!" said I, incredulously.

"Yes, I have walked right through a furnace."

I was silent from amazement. In a moment another Voice said, "He is gone," and in some way I felt that I was alone.

I was at the theatre with my mother one evening, and was much interested in the audience, thinking of no spirit certainly, when the Voice said to me: "I am going to see the play with you to-night; here I am, right beside you;" and as an empty seat was next to mine, I involuntarily picked up my opera glass, which lay upon it, that my companion might sit down.

On occasions too numerous to mention, and in the midst of all the daily affairs of life, the Voices have come creeping into my consciousness, with a sympathy and an understanding of my most secret thoughts, as beautiful as startling. Often when my own spirit has been exalted and purified by prayer, the Voices of

As It is to Be

many together have assured me of their approval, and declared that such communion with God is the very breath of success and happiness, here and hereafter.

Among other strange, I may say incomprehensible revelations given me at this time, was the assertion by one of the Voices that even before he died he had had communication with me, although at a distance.

“ I did not recognize it then, any more than you did. I was not aware that I literally sent my spirit out of my body to you and used a mutual friend to express some of my feelings and sentiments towards you. But it seems that I did actually do so. I can hardly believe the fact that when still I was a living man, pursuing my vocations in a distant city, this spirit, this actual I, used to leave that body and converse with you by animating the thoughts of our mutual friend, influencing him to go to you and using him as a medium through whom I could have the pleasure of grasping your hand. Nevertheless it is true, but it is a law of being which even now I do

Light and Speed

not pretend to understand, and when I became aware of it, it was as astonishing to me as it is to you."

I studied this statement for a long time, and could but remember instances when it seemed to me as if there was actual communication between myself and my friends, without any visible means. Often I have been so thinking of the same thing at the same time, that letters of the same date, written by mamma and by me to each other, would dwell on the same subject, and even seem to answer each other's questions. Again, I have at times, in meeting a person, seemed to see a new semblance, a phase of character not their own.

"Then it is possible for a human being to throw the spirit out of the body to a distance?" I said.

"Yes. Have you not many times been mechanically doing something, while your thoughts were earnestly and entirely absorbed with some place or person at a distance? And if any one suddenly startled you with a question, would it not take a moment to with-

As It is to Be

draw your thoughts from that distant object and turn them to the person at hand ? ”

“ Oh ! often.”

“ You were laughed at for being absent-minded, perhaps. The word was no misnomer. Your mind, your spirit, were actually absent and your body was actually vacant save of enough ethereal life principle and consciousness to keep it going. A cord of attraction still held your spirit in direct communication with it, yet was so attenuated as to permit an actual absence of the dominant force. I have found this out since I came here, and I confess I have heard nothing that surprised me more.”

“ Do you not suffer mentally when you observe the grief of your friends ? Did you not pity me when I wept ? ”

“ I did not suffer, I was not unhappy, and yet I did sympathize with you.”

“ How could you see me in anguish and not be pained ? ”

“ Because I see how little human grief is, how unreal, how baseless. You wept because

Light and Speed

you thought of me as dead, absent forever, lost until you should die yourself. Yet here I stood beside you, far more alive than yourself, and conscious of the absurdity of your grief. Yes, I know that even an imaginary grief is still a grief, but I could see how short-lived it would be — what a comparatively momentary affair your whole life would be until you came to me — and how certain you were to feel as I did when you did come. I felt as a mother feels who sees her baby sob over a broken toy. She knows baby will have a whole lifetime of sweet things ahead, and the toy is so small, such a nothing.”

“Then human life is, after all, a little toy, and if our friends die, we may feel that they have only broken a bauble,” said I, bitterly.

“To enter into the jewel life of princes,” said the Voice.

My serenity softly returned. And I notice that always, after a chat with the Voices, life assumes a more serene aspect. I feel that it is short but significant, and to be used as if it were endless. A vast sweep of ideas seems

As It is to Be

to be waiting for me to enter in on them, where, in majestic splendor of limitless beauty and grandeur, they swing around an eternal centre. Ideas seem to assume form to my consciousness, and I vaguely feel as if every word was to be found symbolized in the spirit life.

CHAPTER IV

THE LAW OF ATTRACTION

I HAVE recently felt what I call a sort of spiritual dryness, a stagnation of the more intellectual and spiritual qualities within me, and I have aspired to no communication with the Voices, on account of various material circumstances which I did not deem appropriate. But the other night I earnestly desired the presence of that delightful Voice which has so often cheered me, and I had hardly uttered in my mind the strong wish before I heard it, reproaching me in most tender terms for the long time I had allowed to elapse since I had called on it before. It seemed to be grieved.

“But have you not been with me, nevertheless?” I asked, surprised at the expression that my banishment of it had been such a

As It is to Be

trial and its eagerness to approach me had been so keen.

“Why, certainly not,” it replied seriously; “we cannot intrude upon you! If you do not manifest any desire for us, we have no right and no power to seek you. We no longer belong to the earth or to the mortal state, that we should be governed by mortal laws, and we can only come to you when you send out your attraction in the form of a wish or a desire.

“In spirit everything is governed by attraction, mutual attraction. We may long never so much to be beside you, but if you send out no attraction, if you do not think of or care for us, you literally banish us from your presence — aye, from even the very knowledge of you. Everything is reciprocal here. You seek us with a tender longing, and we instantly respond with an equal desire, like the two ends of a magnet, one positive, the other negative, with a constant current between, over which flow telegraphic communications.”

“I have often noticed,” said I, “that you

The Law of Attraction

seem to dwell on the word 'attention' in your descriptions of spirit existence. To attract attention seems to be one of the strong powers of that state, or indeed the manipulation of the law of attraction."

"Yes," was answered, "attention is one of the prime attributes of spiritual law. The mind or soul must be made to set attention on whatever it wishes to accomplish. Attention is the basal quality of will. No one can will, positively and successfully, without first profoundly setting the mind on the object of desire. It is for this reason that we must be obedient to the law of attraction regarding our visits to you. Unless you have us in mind to the extent of consciously or unconsciously willing us to come, we have no current whereby to approach you. You make a magnetic current by throwing your will out toward us, and we swim to you on its vibrating wave."

CHAPTER V

EVIL AND PURITY

A RECENT conversation brought out this point in morals. I asked (in effect) what should be the highest aim of a human being during this life. Not all thinkers believe that goodness is the highest good, or righteousness the highest aim to be pursued by man. For instance, Draper's "Intellectual Development of Europe" leads up to quite another idea. The answer was what one might have expected, but with a distinction.

"It is, of course, to build up a perfect character. But to do this one should not so much endeavor to eschew evil, as to enlarge and develop good. It is more important to set the mind on doing and being good than to set the will to resist and overcome evil."

"Why?"

Evil and Purity

“BECAUSE, WHEN THE SOUL ENTERS THIS WORLD IT BRINGS WITH IT ONLY THE GOOD. THE EVIL IS COMPLETELY PURGED AWAY. NOTHING EVIL CAN ENTER HERE. But the residue of permanent good may be very small and the spiritual vitality very low, so that the man or woman may be a very infant in his new life, and have to progress from the mere germ, while he who has built up a large and noble character of good will take his stand as an adult.”

“But what is the difference?” I cried. “If a man eschews evil, he is good, is n’t he? and if he is good, just so much good goes with him into the other world.”

The spirit laughed. “True in one sense, but let me illustrate: Have you not met apathetic, self-satisfied, quiet people, who moved through life without doing any positive evil, but also who did no positive good? That is what Jesus meant when he spoke the parable of the ten talents. These people simply exist. They do not use their thirty or fifty years of life to any advantage. They do not grow; they do not progress. The

As It is to Be

spark of spiritual vitality does not become a flame; it smoulders, amounting to nothing. In them evil is little, certainly, and there is little to cast off; but there is so little life of good, that they might as well never have been in a fleshly envelope at all, for all the status they gain here." ~~X~~

"Oh!" I exclaimed, "that is very plain indeed."

The Voice then spoke to me in a new way.

"I am going to show you the symbol of a pure, beautiful soul," it said. And presently I became aware (although with my eyes closed, at night in a dark room) of a lily. It was a very large lily. It had no leaves about it, but was a pure white blossom, standing alone on its stem, about twenty feet from me. But it did not continue simply a white lily. It turned into a sparkling silver lily, and soon seemed to pulse with throbbing life, its whole form vibrating with seeming vitality and finally throwing off a silver radiance supremely beautiful. In my estimate, it was at least two feet high. I finally opened my eyes, and I saw and heard no more.

CHAPTER VI

SENSES OF SPIRIT

MY chats with the Voices have increased of late, and I have asked them some questions about myself and themselves. Their answers were often unexpected.

“When you come back to me, thus entering the atmosphere of earth, do you re-assume a human form?”

I fully expected they would answer, “Certainly,” but instead of that they said “No.”

“What form do you assume?” said I.

“I cannot describe it to you; it is not like anything you have ever seen.”

“Is it round?”

“No.”

“Is it oblong or oval?”

“Well, yes, somewhat so; it is permeated with light.”

As It is to Be

“ If that is so and it exists in an atmosphere of light, I don't see how one can see it. What difference is there between an object absolutely permeated with light and the light itself ? ”

“ We have form enough to be individualized. You would, if you were in a similar form, recognize me, but if you saw me with your mortal eyes you would not recognize me at all.”

“ Where are you at this moment ? ”

“ I am standing beside and bending over you.”

“ And yet if I could see as well as hear you I should not see you with your former human resemblance of the body ? ”

“ No.”

“ For one to see you, then, you would have to what they call ‘ materialize ’ yourself ? Can that be done ? ”

“ I believe it can.”

“ Did you ever do it ? ”

“ No.”

“ Well, if you have no human form you

Senses of Spirit

have no human eyes; therefore, can you see?"

"Yes."

"And hear?"

"Certainly."

"And taste?"

"We can taste if we please, but we do not often. Taste and smell are more animal than sight and hearing, and we endeavor to throw off all the less spiritual qualities as soon as possible."

"I can imagine that."

"All the senses are wonderfully intensified here. We have a sense of smell a thousand times more acute than that of a human being."

"I should think that would be decidedly unpleasant. I sometimes thank my stars that my sense of smell is not particularly acute."

"That is because you are liable to smell unpleasant odors. Here we cannot smell anything unpleasant, because all is eternal vitality. Unpleasant odors come from decay, disease, and death. They arise from the refuse of nature, and are safeguards, warning humanity

As It is to Be

away from their dangerous proximity ; but here, nothing but the odors of sweet and clean life obtain, and therefore no kind of smell can be obnoxious."

"How about touch?" said I.

"Touch with us is contact of atmospheres. It is not like the shaking of two human hands. Imagine what it would be to be joined, united, intermingled with, and one with your destined mate, the love of your soul, yourself and not yourself, the man-spirit, counterpart of your woman-spirit — can you conceive of any greater joy?"

"No. But if you have neither eyes nor ears, how do you perceive?" I went on.

"Our perceptions are a universal cognizance of all things that can appeal to consciousness."

"That, I should think, was a definition of God's powers."

"One can be conscious of a thing without having the power to rule or dispose it, can one not?"

"Certainly. I am conscious that the sun

Senses of Spirit

shines in the heavens, but I am not able to direct his course."

"Very well, that is precisely our condition. We are aware of whatever attracts our attention, but we do not presume to alter anything not given us to do."

"And how do you find out how to make things attract your attention?"

"How do *you* find things attracting your attention on earth? Everything appeals in itself, does it not? You hear of things from every possible source; your eyes alone hold your attention to a million things each day. But here we have the added power of getting knowledge by simply desiring it. To desire is to will. To will is to have. To have is to know and understand, in this state of instant perception of truth. I would say that if we desire knowledge, we pursue it in natural sequence. We study as gradually (though more simply) as you do in your books. We go on from step to step in any topic which we wish to master.

"For instance, let Chemistry be the sub-

As It is to Be

ject; we proceed to set our attention on any combination of matter, and the more intensely we will to know, the more rapidly the processes of change in the arrangement and composition of matter go on, unfolding themselves to our understanding and perception, until the whole process is complete, and that branch of chemistry is fully understood. It is demonstrated to what answers to the very eyes and ears, smell, taste and touch, besides other senses of the spirit, so that it becomes as familiar to him as his own new name."

"You have used two expressions in that sentence which I do not understand. You speak of 'other senses' and a 'new name.' Now, what do you mean by these expressions?"

"We have added senses, senses of perception and conception, senses of will, of estimate, of deduction, of conclusion, all of them fingers of the mind, able to grasp ideas as you grasp objects with your hands. They are active and conscious elements of spirit life, moving with the same ease with which your sense of

Senses of Spirit

sight moves, and carrying the same conviction to our reason. You do not doubt the evidence of your own senses, do you ? ”

“ No.”

“ Neither do we doubt the evidence of our senses, which assure us with equal precision of the stability of our conclusions. Reason, with you, consists of the conscious exertion of all the elements of logic. In the human form they are mere germs, and have to be manipulated slowly by constant comparison ; but with us they become absolute. We can rely upon them. We do not have to constantly compare. What is, appeals to us exactly for what it is, in its every minutia of attribute, and as there can be no untruth, no deception, or misappliance, or falsity, we know what we know, without fear, argument, or doubt.”

“ Let us go back a little,” said I. “ What is the advantage of this intensity of sense — as, for instance, the sense of smell ? What is the benefit of being able to smell a thousand times more acutely than a human being ? ”

As It is to Be

“The intensity is not confined to any one sense, and in all cases it is exactly graduated according to the strength and use required by the spirit who possesses it. For instance, also, we have the telescopic and the microscopic eye, or perception, which is the same thing, and we can hear at the distance of millions of miles, or close by.”

“But if you can hear thus, what a jumble it must be! How can you make sense out of it? In one place the whirr of steam; at the same time, on another planet, the roar of cyclonic storm-winds; music in a thousand different places; oceans tearing on a million miles of shore —”

“Stop! Do not speak such inharmonies. Nothing of the kind occurs. We hear by the law of attraction and attention, as we live by it. We hear what attracts us or we attract, or what we wish to hear only. Supposing we wish to hear an oration by a man on your planet. Do you suppose his voice would be submerged under an overwhelming billow of universal sound? No. We should hear what

Senses of Spirit

we were attracted to hear, as you would, — the rustle of the audience, the speaker's words, the environment of human habitations ; but, mark you, if we wish to visit a fiery world, bursting continually into deafening explosions, or swept by a demoniac roar of flame and fury, our strength to receive that impression would be instantly adapted to the conditions, and we should suffer no pain nor inconvenience from what would strike you deaf for life. Or would we gather into our consciousness the viewless winds which blow around the four quarters of your world, or chase with unfaltering wing the ministering angel who bears the chalice of God's love to bless your tiny sphere — behold, we fly on the pinions of immortal will, even to its boundaries.

“Such is the dominion of spirit over matter. Such the power of everlasting life, unchangeable and perfect, over mutable matter, ever changing, ever imperfect, ever advancing, ever receding, restlessly producing that eternal motion which is its basal law. Passivity in matter is impossible ; its very existence depends

As It is to Be

on its endless activity. But spirit depends not upon activity for its existence ; it depends upon conscious will as the basal law,—a will above and outside of itself, yet within and a part of itself also ; and for this reason it remains in one condition as to its existence, resting passive upon the bosom of Infinity, irrespective of every mutation of matter, and independent of it. And it is the intuitive hint of this fact, caught by the sages of the ancient world, that has led to that doctrine of the absorption of the soul into the God-head, which has become popularly known as Nirvana.”

“ You certainly have made it very plain to me, and I think we have brought your statements up to date, if I may so express it, all but the meaning of the new name to which you alluded. Now, what new name have you? ”

“ Many. Whereas in your language we were once called mortals, we are now called spirits ; but that is only a general term, indicating a state more than a race. Individually

Senses of Spirit

we each assume a new name with our new conditions."

"What for?"

"If you went into a foreign land to become a permanent inhabitant, using the language, and entering society as one of the same class and with identified interests, would you be likely to use your English name strictly, or would you gradually assume the accent and style of pronunciation which would always be given to it by those who were your companions?"

"Doubtless I should gradually fall into their way of calling me."

"So do we. The difference between human and spiritual language is radical. One is a language of symbols; the other a language of realities. Your English is represented by a series of symbols and tones, which in their various combinations represent your meaning, as the words are written or spoken. You have twenty-six signs, which do to express in their combinations the ideas you wish to convey; and, corresponding to those twenty-six

As It is to Be

signs, you have tones which, in their varied combinations, produce the same effect. One you recognize by the eye, one by the ear. You smell, taste, and touch neither ; and that is an illustration of the superior intellectuality of hearing and sight over the other senses, as I said before.

“ But we have a language of actualities, of realities, which needs no symbolization to be communicated one to the other. And as we are different in having a language not made up of words, and not dependent upon signs, so we have also a new name ; as, for instance, my name, had it been John Anderson on earth, would not now be called John Anderson by my associates.”

“ What would you be called ? ”

The spirit smiled. I know it did. I could feel the smile just as if I had heard a laugh. “ How can I answer you, child ! How can I tell you, when I must speak in signs, in language, to explain to you something which is neither, and which cannot be expressed therein ? ”

Senses of Spirit

“It was in Revelation,” I remarked, “that the ‘new name’ was spoken of. What kind of a product was that book? Was it really a vision of heavenly things, or was it an allegorical narrative of past experience? Was it what we call an inspired work, or was it the writings of a man or men whose brains were a little turned? What authority should it have over our lives?”

“None. It was not intended as a work on morals. It was simply an *exposé* of the writer’s individual conception of the eternal life.”

“Did he hit the truth?”

“More or less, yes. He was intensely intuitive for his age — at least, the writer who so described the heavenly kingdom. Yet the book is deeply tinctured with the human prejudices of the age and nation and the culture of his time. He also was, necessarily, inclined to Oriental symbolism in his expressions, and the result is that the work is almost useless to modern investigation.”

“Still, it was in a measure inspired?”

As It is to Be

“Yes ; but he was an imperfect medium, and blended his previous education with his present discoveries. He had not an eye single to the propagation of pure truth.”

“Alas ! few perfect mediums can be found, I fancy,” said I.

CHAPTER VII

OUR CONDITIONS AND SURROUNDINGS AFTER DEATH

SOME of the communications of yesterday were so fascinating to me that I could hardly bear to stop writing, but I was tired and gave it up. The last words uttered by the Voices were a courteous sentence, thanking me for my attention and for writing for them. This brought me to a sudden recognition of the material part of this intercourse, my pen.

“ You dictate to me now, it seems ? ”

“ Yes.”

Up to yesterday I had only transcribed the conversations occurring between us, when at night, or when sitting somewhere by myself, I have thought of the Voices and asked them some questions. But yesterday I kept right

As It is to Be

on, my pen flying at a tremendous rate, and I did not stop to see or think whether I was finishing a narrative or going on with something new. I began again :

“ In the Johnstown disaster thousands of people perished. They doubtless included a great many phases of character. Some were intellectual, some brutal, some innocent, some sinful, some spiritual, some animal. Now, perishing all together, when each entered the new state of the spiritual life, what was the spritual status of such ? ` How did they begin ? Who welcomed them ? Or were they left unwelcomed ? It was the transferring of a whole small town from one state of being into another. All went together — neighbors, cousins, brothers, minister and congregation. What became of them ? The relationships remained the same, the circumstances and environment were radically changed. Can you explain this ? ”

“ Those people occupied the same status toward each other that they did on earth. The changing of state did not change their

Our Conditions, etc., after Death

characters. But they are widely separated as to condition. Many of them were sad, afflicted, poor, desolate, and discontented on earth. All that is past. The children enter into a land of unspeakable beauty."

"Are they separated from their parents?"

"No. There is no such thing as separation so long as there is attraction between spirits."

"Can the parents follow them into that land of unspeakable beauty?"

"They can, but many of them do not yet desire it."

"Where do they remain?"

"They remain near their old homes, or seek out the homes of spirits whom they knew and loved. They go where they are most strongly attracted."

"That is what I wish to get at. Heaven, the land of beauty, is not shut upon any one who wishes to enter it? All at least enter? There is no, 'Too late, too late, ye cannot enter here'?"

"No; but unfortunately most spirits, when they just leave the earth, do not seek or aspire

As It is to Be

to it. They still cling to the planet on which they were born as human, and do not at first rise to the conception or belief in anything higher. For instance, the farmer might return to his wheat-field, the weaver to his loom."

"But if they have spiritual vision, I should think they could see that land, see their innocent children there, and fly after them."

"They see only what attracts their attention. They attract their children to them instead of going after them."

"Well, that is what I call a slough of despond, and is in exact harmony with that despairing book called 'Light on the Hidden Way.'"

"No, it is not a slough of despond; it is simply that as yet they have not progressed in spirit life."

"How long does such a state of affairs continue?"

"The progression is instantaneous, and proceeds more or less rapidly, according to the vitality of the germ,—precisely like birth into your world. If the infant is weak, ill-

Our Conditions, etc., after Death

developed, puny, sickly, it grows slowly and feebly at first, but after a little, with good care, becomes as well and strong as any child. So with the spiritual germ."

"But meantime, how about the feelings and emotions of these weak ones? Do they not suffer by comparing themselves with their friends? Do they not despair of ever progressing, and sink back to earth in despondency?"

"Such would be the case if evil and sorrow could ever enter here; but I have told you that good, nothing but good, can exist here, and nothing but life, pure life, can fill the spirit. Now, however little may be the good and the life apportioned to a spirit, what there is of it is unadulterated by anything which can bring sorrow, for goodness and eternal life are joy in themselves."

"Why can nothing but good exist in the spiritual state?"

"Because evil is wholly material. It is an attribute of what you call nature, and is the opposite force which impels incessant action.

As It is to Be

Without evil the operations of the material world could not go on. Evil properly is not a malicious or malignant force; but in its results, beneficent. But it is a force which may be abused by the conscious will, associated closely with a material envelope as a medium of power. Besides, the definition given to evil by humanity has always been by far too sweeping a one. An earthquake, a cyclone, a fire, a destroying of one race to build up another — these and a thousand other things like them, which are simply the changes and mutations of nature, necessary to its very existence, have been designated by man as evils, when in fact they have all worked together for his good.”

“ But what of spiritual evil — the evil of the mind, of the soul, which preys upon its neighbor and gains pleasure at the expense of another ? ”

“ There is no spiritual evil. Spirit is ever pure, no matter what are its associations. It may be crushed out, it may be prevented from entering and progressing to any extent in the

Our Conditions, etc., after Death

personal identity, but what does enter that human body is the saving germ which keeps it from utter annihilation."

"What, then, is the evil that is unjust, untrue, murderous, thievish, and every way dishonorable?"

"It is the survival of the earth element of basal force, the ingredient in the universal composition which charged the mass with contending forces and started the cosmos into active being. Evil of all kinds is elemental, and a necessary part of the order of things. He who is born of a savage race is far more full of this elemental passion than he who has come of a race which has cultivated itself out of and above the material, sufficiently to subdue and dominate it; while he who has cultivated the intellectual and the spiritual in himself sufficiently to rule his body and his character, almost emancipating himself from the burden of the elemental attributes, has already half emerged into that state where the material is put off entirely, with the evil which belongs to it, and it alone."

As It is to Be

"It seems, then, that the punishment received by a person who has been inclined to evil all his life, yet still retains some mere germ of the spirit, is not an actual punishment of remorse, grief, and anguish, but is simply the fact of his being an infant spirit, of less powers than his better friends and neighbors?"

"If a man knew what that meant he would consider it punishment enough!" exclaimed the Voice.

"What does it mean? You will excuse me for thus mercilessly treading on your heels, as it were, in this new path of learning. I confess I do not scruple to make you prove a statement by asking you point-blank questions."

"It means annihilation of a thousand opportunities for enjoyment which he might have had, if he had chosen to enter here with his powers strong and active. He can but realize his deprivation of magnificent, aye, glorious powers which would have led him into higher and higher joys, and also to know that, having taken no advantage of the chances offered him in the earth life, he has to begin

Our Conditions, etc., after Death

at the foot of the ladder, and toilsomely make his way up to the level of his wiser associates."

"But does this not cause him grief?"

"No, not the kind of grief that you know. No spirit can ever be hopeless or doubtful. He knows there is no more death, and he feels within himself the promise of perpetual youth."

"But if he is not attracted towards good; if he prefers to remain passive?"

"Do you think he is left alone, — without teaching or help? Do you leave a babe alone, and give him neither care, food, nor shelter? Does even an animal neglect her young, and leave it to perish of ignorance, inability, or helplessness? And are we, who live in an atmosphere permeated with the light of God, less tender or less just or generous than the lion or the tiger? No soul is ever left to its own inability or ignorance. It is aroused and helped, fed and clothed with knowledge and truth, until its past career of evil on the earth is so blotted from its consciousness that the earth life becomes like a dream — of no mean-

As It is to Be

ing or moment, save as the embryo stage of a progress which it has forever left behind."

"I hope this does not occur while one of its loved ones remains still in the flesh."

"Ah! I was speaking then of ultimate, not immediate things. With us time no longer tells. We see forward and backward at once, and the episode of the earth life seems but a day amid days."

"Speaking of ultimatums, I suppose the ultimatum of all progress is to see and be one with God. You know it is written, 'The pure in heart shall see God.'"

"Yes."

"You remember who spoke those words, do you not?"

"Yes."

"Who was he?"

"He was a Jew, a messenger, a prophet, a seer, a being of singular powers and singular mission."

"Was he simply a man?"

"We believe he was the Son of God, exactly as he said."

Our Conditions, etc., after Death

"Did he ever teach that he was the Creator?"

"No; you cannot find such an expression."

"He said, 'I and My Father are One.'"

"That is true, and so they were one, yet he was not the Original Cause, as the word 'Father' indicates. They were one in purpose — just as you and I are one in purpose: you to hear and execute what I say and give you to do."

"That is a magnificent illustration."

"But let us drop theology for awhile," said I. "I want to know about the relationships of heaven. I want to get some kind of an idea what my home is going to be like. All these ideas of space and endless time and infinity are not cozy and homelike or human. In thinking of myself solitarily roaming about space, without a settled place to go home to, I feel a sense of lonesomeness, even horror, which kills out all desire to go."

"Do you think, then, that we are in a constant state of wandering over creation?"

"Why, I don't know — I don't know any-

As It is to Be

thing about it. My idea of intense satisfaction on earth, is to have a lovely and artistic home, with my dear friends about me, leisure to study, money to travel, good health, and good morals."

"You can have all these here, if you wish."

"What! A home of my very own, where I can be as hospitable as I wish and still find leisure to pursue knowledge and progress in mind and soul?"

"I see no reason why you should not have all these things and many more."

"Very well — I do not want them — no, I will not have them, *unless the meanest human being shall also share them*, or obtain their good wishes equally with myself. I realize Eternity enough for that! If I thought one poor miserable soul were to be shut into 'outer darkness' while I sat inside enjoying myself, I could not, I would not rest until he too came in."

"MY CHILD, THAT IS JUST THE WAY EVERY SPIRIT FEELS, FROM GOD DOWN."

Our Conditions, etc., after Death

I must say that this speech made me draw a breath of relief. It taught me to believe not the worst, but the best of God. For if I, in my mere mortal impurity, can feel no joy in the thought of my own salvation while another suffers deprivation and sorrow, what must He be, far-reaching and abundant as is His beautiful love?

“Do you wear clothing?”

“We are clothed upon with immortality.”

“What does that convey?”

“Light is our element, and in different degrees of light we are clothed. Yes, we are in colors and in different shades of color. We will our clothing as we please, yet there are some who have not a choice — those who have not yet learned to will.”

“What do they wear?”

“Their simple immortality as a garment.”

“Has immortality color or form?”

“No, not as you mean it. You mean to be a little sarcastic, and ask if immortality is actually a coat or a dress. But we know what mere immortality is without the exercise of

As It is to Be

conscious will, and the former is distinct from the latter."

"Many beautiful things are mentioned in Revelation, as, for instance, precious stones. Now, can one wear precious stones in heaven?"

"If we were to have precious stones, why not all kinds of follies and fashions? Do you think a spirit delights in material combinations of silks and satins, feathers and ribbons? They may be used as symbols—but, child, you wish to make a heaven as material as your earth."

CHAPTER VIII

IDEA-FACTS

ALL these months, and not one written word of the Voices! I have been far to sea and back again, and experienced many new scenes, met new people, and have added to my knowledge of the world one of its beautiful tropic islands. During this time I have not been deserted by the Voices, but I have kept no record of what they have said to me, save in memory, which, thank God, is as good for conversations as it is bad for dates and names. Of all, however, that I have heard from them, little has been of more than personal interest. What has been otherwise, I will faithfully recall. The fault has lain wholly with my surroundings. I had neither leisure nor opportunity to think nor listen, yet I have missed it. But once I questioned: "Could you tell whether a man

As It is to Be

would die, supposing he were ill? Do you know when any one is going to die?"

The answer was: "The issues of life and death are in the will of the Creator. We cannot, any more than when mortal, tell when a child is to be born or a mortal to die. He alone knows from whom come both life and death. It is His secret and we cannot penetrate it."

"I think I asked you about birth and the embryo of a human being, and you said, some time back, that the spirit enters into a child the instant God forms the idea of that child: that it does not have to become an actual material fact before it is an individual spirit."

"The idea is the fact. The material form is only the manifestation of that fact. When God originates a new idea, then a new fact has been uttered; and the mere putting it into a visible form is but the throwing a filmy mantle around a statue."

"And do spirits also utter facts in the way of ideas?"

"Not as creative. Creation belongs to the

Idea-Facts

Infinite ; combination to His creature. We may manipulate ideas when once He has uttered them, but no one can originate the smallest truth."

" But how can ideas or facts be recognized as such, unless they do actually become manifested in some form ? "

" They are not so recognized, nor intended to be. They each do assume form, from the grasses of the sea to the stars that shine above the waves. The practicality of God is one of His infinite perfections. He no sooner conceives an idea than He puts it to definite use. Were we to be able to cognize ideas before God had uttered them, we should be able to read His mind. No ; all I wish to teach you is that ideas are facts in themselves, while the transient transmutation of them into a material form does not affect them one way or the other. They are as real out of form as in form. They are the play of that Almighty Intellect which forever throws out, in undiminished splendor, abundant and eternal, new conceptions, which instantly take their place

As It is to Be

and appointed station in their destined order, not swerving so much as a hair from the law of harmony, which is rooted in the Godhead itself.

“That you have entered into an envelope of flesh upon a diminutive planet to exercise, in the majesty of freedom, that will and imagination and reason given to your portion of Him, is not of particular consequence. Had you never been born, you would still have been a fact, no matter into what shape you were transmuted. If another planet had been your transient abiding-place, or had you slumbered on in indistinguishable night up to this moment, you would still have existed as a fact, an idea, since He uttered you, and nothing henceforth could annihilate you. As it happened you fell into the order of the humans (or, I should say, as He disposed of your idea that way), you now possess the attributes of humanity, and proceed on forever from that level of being. If, however, it had not been so, your entity would still have been a fact.”

“I cannot understand that. If I am an

Idea-Facts

idea-fact, it must be an idea-fact of a human being, not an idea-fact of a dog, or a tree, or a drop of water."

"You do not understand it, because it is so hard to make you comprehend what an idea is. To you an idea must have form. It must allude to something visible, or to something that has come within the imagination or experience of man. You say you have abstract ideas which are not reducible to form, but you will find that even your most abstract idea is dependent upon a train of logic that is based on expression, manifestation, in some way or another. Why, an idea must have words to be conveyed to your minds at all. To us an idea is a reality, known absolutely without the appendage of any form at all. And when God utters an idea, it is a second process to put it into form, yet we are cognizant of it before that second process is begun."

"Can you not illustrate this? I find it still vague."

"Yes. Do you not know that you can take a letter which you never saw until that in-

As It is to Be

stant, from a person you never heard of, and without perceiving so much of the handwriting as a single word, can place it upon your forehead, and almost instantly tell the writer's character without a failure? Do you not instantly say, 'sentimental, dreamy, poetic, fond of silence,' etc., as the case may be?"

"Yes, I have done it many times, but I never knew how I did it, nor do I understand it at all."

"What was it that came into your mind before you uttered the word 'sentimental'? Was it anything with a form? Did you recognize it as anything that you had ever seen or heard? Or was it an instantaneous cognizance of something to which you involuntarily gave the name of 'sentimental'?"

"Why, it was an intuition which amounted to a fact; for the word 'sentimental' actually uttered itself to express it."

"There! Now you yourself have described an idea. Your spirit was sufficiently awake to be what you call intuitive, but what we call normal enough to know an idea-fact before it

Idea-Facts

was reduced to form. You yourself gave it form in the word 'sentimental,' with which you described a phase of the writer's character, but which existed and would exist, whether you had ever noted it or not, as a fact, formless yet real."

"And you say that a spirit can perceive and understand an idea as soon as it has been uttered and before it assumes any definite form? Is not the utterance of an idea an expression of an idea, and is not an expression a form?"

"Yes, but let me illustrate this by a very commonplace incident. You lost your screw-driver, hunted all over the house for it, gave it up and forgot it, did you not? Then two months later you suddenly called out to your husband, who had come into another room, 'Oh, Joe, I think I loaned that screw-driver to Miss A, after all!' And he returned, 'Yes, I have just been there, and she gave it to me. Here it is.' Now you perceived the fact before you knew it. You 'sensed it' by your soul-knowledge, and that is the way we

As It is to Be

have knowledge of ideas before they reach us in form. All I can explain, and all I wish to make plain is, that if God had formed the idea of a new palace built by the side of the river Thames, that, before it had assumed form, before a stone was quarried, or an architect had conceived a line of it, or the first notion of it had dawned in the head of the man who would choose to build it, we could know it and conceive of it and acknowledge it to be a fact — as immutable as the fact that the palaces of the kings of Egypt did once exist by the river Nile. Nor are there heavenly maps, nor paradisaical drawings and specifications by which we could look forward to its completion. The only form it would be in would be the will of God, which we all know, by heart and by soul, and by love and by joy, the moment it acts.”

“It seems to me, then, that a spirit is practically omniscient.”

“It is, according to its capacity of will, attraction, and attention. That is all. We do not know everything that will happen or

Idea-Facts

has happened. All we know of either is what attracts us or we attract. We act on the universe and the universe acts on us reciprocally. If, for instance, we had the building instinct or taste, there is nothing whatever to hinder our knowing about all the buildings that have been built, or all that will be built, so far as God has willed them. As long as we pursue the knowledge of building, we can have the whole field of the past to study in. The fact that a building has crumbled to material ruin is no hindrance whatever. The material manifestation was but the clothing of the idea. The idea still exists, for the idea is spiritual and eternal, and we recognize an idea, as I said before, without the need of a physical expression."

"But does not all this take time? Can you cognize ideas to the very end in all their multitudinous variations all at once?"

"The knowledge comes in succession, certainly. We progress from one point to another."

"But what is succession, what is progress,

As It is to Be

but the using of time? Yet you say there is no time in the spirit world."

"Time is a man-made division of light and darkness. Time is a man-made measure of space. The fact that man is limited by a body which cannot move at will with the rapidity of thought, has forced him to measure out the interval which it will take him to get from one place to another, and he calls it an hour or a day. Time is the sign-manual of human ignorance. It is the limit set by God to the intellect of mortality. If you eliminate time you eliminate space, and conceive, as we do, of eternity. But no; by comparison you live, move, and have your being. You compare the future by the past, and the present with both. You cannot think of anything with neither beginning nor end. If you draw a circle, even in your imagination, you begin it, and when the line comes around again you end it. Therefore to you, one thing after another means a series of moments. Progress means a series of actions through a series of stages; cause and effect, and time to do it in.

Idea-Facts

“ This is the small round of the finite mind. But to us time is neither yesterday, to-morrow, nor to-day. Now is all there is, and all is included in Now. And all will ever be included in Now. Our advancing in the attainment of ideas is but a manipulation of the ever-present Now, which neither alters nor changes as to its verity. The manifestations of ideas in myriad forms, and our becoming cognizant of them, requires no comparison of either time or space. We do not say, ‘ Last year I was a million miles from here ! ’ If we had been a million miles multiplied by a million miles, we should still have been just where we are, and where we have been, and where we shall be — in a state of being which is everywhere at once, and therefore without possibility of calculation by any kind of measurement. In so far as we are spirit we eschew limitations, and the nearer we approach perfection the more unfettered we become.”

“ Well, even although I am fettered and a mortal, I don't see practically why I am not in the Now as much as you are! I am, it

As It is to Be

seems, the mere physical manifestation of an idea which is in verity an eternal fact, so I don't see why I am not actually enjoying the freedom from space and time as much as you are."

"Just so far as that idea acts in you, you are. It is not the fact, but the comprehension of the fact in which you are lacking. And even you have the comprehension of the freedom of your thought, for in an instant you can send that thought to the planet Venus, or to the isles of the sea you have just quitted, and all this without the slightest difficulty or effort, and without the slightest necessity for measurement, either of time or space. Thus you can prove my statement in your own mind, that it is for the convenience of material conditions that man has invented the clock and the yardstick.

"Mental conditions, even as imprisoned in a brain, do not need these arbitrary rules. You leap beyond almighty depths of material space the moment you turn your eyes to the heavens, and by a ray of light which, being

Idea-Facts

material, has taken ages to reach you, seat yourself instantly upon the crown of a sun to which your own is nothing. This is already your power while yet you crawl in ant-like insignificance upon a dark and fleeting orb. What think you, then, must be your powers when, spurning the material, you spring into the spiritual, partaking in full of all your soul craves, and freed from all that was gross in your condition ?

“Would that man could once know the infinite value of what he so values — time. To him, time, to live a little longer in, to pursue his pleasures in, to snatch from the Unknown another hour of foolish existence, is the one desire. What is its true value to him ? To cultivate, to build up every longing into a conscious willing of righteousness, to add an hourly desire to rise, to expand, to broaden in every fibre of his mind, and most of all, to imitate the unlimited love and generosity of his Maker. Those who gain the most good soonest attain true spiritual powers. Tell that as a fact, an idea-fact, expressed.”

CHAPTER IX

SCIENTIFIC SPIRITUALISM AND HEAVENLY POWERS

THE subject of the union of matter with spirit has always been one of intense interest to me. How far things are spiritual, from the verbenas in the garden to my Folly dog, or from a bit of gold quartz to a child, is a puzzle that I would gladly solve. If God is in all things and all things are in Him ! But I will ask.

“Be good enough to tell me if there was ever a human being who did not even contain a single spark of goodness.”

“No ; positively no, not even an embryo infant.”

“When does the spirit enter into the infant form ? ”

“I have told you that the spirit begins on the conception of the idea in the mind of Eternity.”

Scientific Spiritualism

“The idea, then, I suppose, is the determining power, and not the act of physical union?”

“Why, of course. The act of physical union would be fruitless were it not determined by the will of God to be fruitful. If the idea of the babe is uttered, it is permanent, and finds its expression in a physical form as His law determines. Material, the expression or result of idea, is transitory. Matter alone originates nothing. It is the spirit which animates, not any other power. The union of two portions of matter produces no vital result without the spirit to vivify such union. To you, that which appeals to your senses is substantial and certain. To us it appears as a film, a cobweb, woven across the face of infinity.”

“Then, as the Christ said, or, perhaps, St. Paul, ‘here we see through a glass, darkly, but there, face to face.’ It is then that the material, which, after all, is but a slight barrier, stretches as a veil between us and reality.”

“You are quite right.”

As It is to Be

“Can that veil be penetrated by a mortal?”

“Are you not doing it in some measure?”

“Hearing is not so satisfactory as sight.”

“Mortals have even seen.”

“What state is a mortal in who sees? A normal state, as I am in this minute?”

“Were you in a normal state when you saw the lily?”

“Why, yes, I certainly was. I am as sensible this moment as I ever am, and I was then. But I have always heard that clairvoyance is accompanied by a lethargic state — trance, coma, or whatever they choose to call it. Is such a state of body necessary?”

“No, and yes. It depends upon the person. You are affected by simple, plain impressions on the brain. These need not alter your physical or intellectual powers. Indeed, the fact that you sit intelligently recording our conversation proves that. Others are impressed in their emotions, imaginations, sentiments, passions, predilections, the intensest of these being the weakest to resist and the easiest to manipulate. The predominant force in you

Scientific Spiritualism

is reason, and it is easiest approached and moulded into the forms of truth.

“Much of the reasoning in the world is wholly wrong because it starts from false premises. The material so dominates the imagination that the will becomes obstinate and refuses to admit ideas outside of that realm. To such, a communication like this would seem impossible and therefore fraudulent. You will in all probability never see the symbolical expression of spirit life, unless under the most favorable conditions, which rarely occur. Others could not hear the Voices which so readily impress you.”

“In all this you tacitly admit that there is actual communication between the mortal and the spirit life going on?”

“There certainly is a constant and advantageous exchange of influences, both recognized and unrecognized. They are visible and invisible, open and silent.”

“Can this be increased so that the majority of people can receive communications from that other world?”

As It is to Be

“Its increase is already rapid. Never in the history of man has there been such an awakening to the truths of spirit. It only lacks some one with sufficient power to demonstrate that truth fully, openly, and without the slightest secrecy or concealment, to gain millions of believers already anxious for a confirmation of their faith.”

“And will such a one appear?”

“In due time. And, meantime, many like you will give a foretaste, in words pregnant with authoritative truth. There must be a revolution of ideas concerning death. Men must learn to think no longer that it is a thing of horror.”

“Has not the fear of death and the mystery in which the after-life has been wrapped acted as a deterrent force to the evil within him?”

“Certainly, up to now. But the world is, say what the pessimists may, gradually evolving into a more spiritual state, and is therefore more capable of demanding and receiving spiritual truths. Among the more intellectual classes you will find this great question of

Scientific Spiritualism

Scientific Spirituality, or the science of spirit, being discussed in a hundred forms ; and even the most steadfast adherents of the material philosophy must and do admit that there is a law, a power, an invisible force outside of itself which lies at the base of and wholly vivifies matter.

“Indeed, they do not deny it ; but coming to the point where life ends and death begins, when asked, ‘What is this life ? Whence comes it ? Out of what is it born ?’ they answer, so far as any tests or possible conclusions from tests are concerned : ‘We do not know. It is certainly not a property of matter, yet we recognize its existence ; we cannot properly trace or define it ; we cannot produce it, yet there it is.’ ”

“Why, life can be produced by the union of matter under certain conditions.”

“The result of the union of two bodies of matter under certain conditions is the entering in to such a united body, the principle of life ; but where that life comes from, or what causes it to enter, or how long it will remain

As It is to Be

after it has entered, you neither know nor can predict.

“You may set a hen on two eggs, each properly impregnated as to natural conditions, and one hatches out a chicken and the other addles. There is no visible difference in the eggs in the first place, but the mysterious force refuses to enter one egg and willingly enters the other. Now, is there a man or a mind, however powerful, that can command that both shall hatch? No. No spirit, even, shall dare to command it. The issues of life are in the will of God, and extend from the worm to the highest organism ever created.”

“Yet that force, after all, seems a compliant force, or else amenable to law; for it is not difficult for the pigeon-fancier to breed new pigeons, nor the bee-keeper to increase his swarm. Nature is generally to be relied upon in this matter as well as in others. She yields to a general law that seems to run through all her works.”

“True, and the complaisance of God, with

Scientific Spiritualism

His untiring energy of love, seldom disappoints the confidence reposed in it."

"Do you think a full knowledge of what the spirit life is would be conducive to the benefit of the world?"

"There can never be full knowledge. There can be approximate knowledge; enough to imbue humanity with newer and higher aims, and different and more righteous ambitions. When it is fully believed that one's standing in spirit life absolutely depends upon the righteousness of one's character, and that a lack of righteousness is the lack of every possible advantage, men will be as anxious to accumulate goodness as now they are to accumulate wealth. Here goodness is wealth. But they must believe it absolutely. And to teach this, to prove this, will be a great mission."

"I am not satisfied with that kind of morality at all. The idea of punishments and rewards was always obnoxious to me. I feel that the only true goodness is goodness for its own sake, with no other motive whatever than

As It is to Be

doing it because it is right. Right for its own sake, irrespective of results, is my idea of pure truth, and I think whoever sets his standard lower than that, errs."

"Yet facts are facts. The man who builds up the strongest character of righteousness in the human life is the man who stands highest, has finest powers and noblest joys in our life. Do you mean to say that teaching a child to be good because that goodness will win the approval of God, the esteem of society, the peace of his own conscience, the enlargement of his intellectual powers, and the usefulness of his existence, thus bringing inevitable joys of a rare character to his experience, is setting before him a system of rewards? Why call them rewards? They are natural sequences and progressions in the line of pure right, and carry in themselves ample pleasure and constant delights. I did not mean to infer that the righteous man should have a more luxurious 'mansion' than his neighbor. I meant that harmony with right gathers to itself all the powers of God, and these advan-

Scientific Spiritualism

tages are commanded by him whose motives are purest and most unselfish. Thus your soul need never be despondent if outward circumstances seem against you. For your soul lives forever, but the outward circumstances are always transient."

"And after death is the soul always prosperous, always happy, always at ease?"

"As regards its environment, yes, and that is the comfort we can give to the most despondent. The conditions of the soul are always harmonious, and therefore favorable to the best possible advancement in every line."

"Ah! the wings of my reason and my imagination flag. I droop under the abstract ideas you give me. I am a woman, with a woman's affections and desires, and when you say the word 'mansions,' I think of the 'many mansions' prepared for us of which Jesus spoke, and I long to know something of them, something of the domestic, the affectional side of a life I too must enter. I cannot bear to think that existence in spirit is a bare existence of mere ideas, or idea-facts, which

As It is to Be

sound to me so cold, so intellectual, so logical !

“What is the relationship of the heart there ? What are the treasures of the happy soul ? What do people do ? How do you occupy your time ? Are you isolated, or in groups ? In families, or communities ? Are there arts and sports and laughter and fun and merriment as on earth, or are you all in some misty atmosphere like that poor ghost spoken of by the poet who wrote of ‘ twilight land,’ of ‘ no man’s land,’ who did not know what he was, for ‘ he only died last night ’ ?

“ Can anything be more weird, more ghastly than a feeling that spirits are nothing but mind ? What is mind if it has no form ? An idea, you will say, and ramble off into more abstractions. Pardon me, but as yet I do not feel at home with you. I don’t know who you are, or where or how you live. Give me some definite hold for my imagination. In two words, make me a pen picture of your home.”

“ We make our homes where we please ; it

Scientific Spiritualism

may be in the country or the city. We build them out of ideas, which, as I told you before, are the only realities. They are very beautiful, and they come and go at will. We evolve them out of ourselves, in the form of ideas. If we wish them to remain, located, they remain. If not, they vanish like a morning dream. There can be no envy of a man who chooses to build himself a palace, when the next man can do the same thing if he pleases. So, if we prefer a palace, we build one, or if we wish a pretty grotto covered with vines, it is ours. Poetry, painting, architecture, sculpture, carving, music, color, every art you know and many you cannot conceive of, are brought into requisition for the adornment of our homes.

“If you see on earth a diversity of taste among the wealthy, in the style of their dwellings or the furnishing of their apartments, how much more might you expect in us, who have all past ages to select from or copy, and all future improvements to anticipate. But there are so many things that are necessary to

As It is to Be

you which we neither require nor miss. To you a message call, burglar alarm, electric lights, steam heat, sewing machines, are all luxuries or necessities of profound benefit. But of what use are all these things to us?

“ We have but to think our messages ; certainly no thieves break through and steal here ; our light is a light permeating all things or shadowed at will ; our atmosphere is neither hot nor cold ; our garments are the emanations of our own fancies.

“ Again, a house unprovided with a fine cook is a poorly arranged home on earth, while here we need no manipulation of material to sustain life ; we breathe it — we are it, and only to gratify a passing fancy or a fleeting remembrance of our former existence on earth, should we will into being the richest dish that ever tempted an epicure.

“ Fragrance is the atmosphere, music is the very air of heaven. Flowers and fruits, beauty unspeakable, scenes beyond description gleam with ever-changeful glory from the farthest heights. Yet height and depth, east and

Scientific Spiritualism

west, north and south, what are they to us? I only use the words you can understand. Our compass points but in one direction, go where we will. To the centre, the centre of this glowing stretch of endlessness, we turn, forever turn.

“Home is in every place at once, for love makes the home, and Love Supreme dwells ever in the very light we breathe.

“What do we do? Fly through the worlds with speed that leaves their lazy flight behind, to carry tidings of great joy abroad. Stoop to the lowliest blossom of a new-fledged planet, to fill its cup with dew.

“Do I speak in parables? The least act is the greatest and the greatest least to those who only live for good. Myriads of sparks from the Infinite leave their material forms, human or otherwise, and need those kindly attentions which weakness, ignorance, lack of development, persistent evil, the embryo stage, and a thousand other causes have made necessary. Do we stand idle when they come to join us?

“And our relations of affection? Him whom

As It is to Be

we hated, we love. Him who wronged us, we enjoy. Her who stole our dearest hope from us, we seek with gladness ; such is the generosity of feeling we seek and obtain.

“ And those we love and loved ? ’T is sublimated into poetry and eloquence ; ’t is taught it never knew how sweet was love. Song and silence, grace and triumph—satisfaction—satisfaction of every wish, every desire, long since so hopeless, comes stealing in and growing on the consciousness until not so much as the sleepest little prayer offered as a child remains to be answered in full.

“ The crown of goodness lies upon each forehead. The joy of goodness beams from each countenance ; the rest of goodness calms every expression ; the glorious strength and energy of goodness lead the way to ever-receding heights.

“ Satiation cannot pall amidst an ever-varied round of new experience—solitude counteracts society at will.

“ You know your favorite Bryant wrote at the end of *Thanatopsis*, ‘ and each shall chase

Scientific Spiritualism

his favorite phantom !' Ah ! that was because the phantom is so often a vain and fleeting materiality. But here we chase our favorite phantom, indeed — a phantom of ideas you call it; a tangible reality we know it; unfading, indestructible; never disappointing our expectations; never refusing to yield up its inmost secret.

“Would the naturalist chase to its ocean bed the denizen of waters miles in depth? What shall hinder his researches? Would the astronomer make himself acquainted with the inner strata of a sun? What prevents him? Would the historian see in actual presence the battles of an Alexander or the *coup d'état* of a statesman? Surely none shall say him nay. Would the disciple of Beethoven hear the master compose his favorite work? Here is Beethoven, and on the eternal canvas of idea was long ago imprinted in indelible notes, tones, harmonies, touches, motions, vibrations, the long past melodies of composers who to you are a half-forgotten name.

As It is to Be

“Heart joined to heart and soul to soul, our other half, ourself and not ourself, the unit, the twin being who rounds us into a perfect entity, the mate who is to us like lovely music wed to noble words, asserts, in ever happy companionship, the possibility of divine union.

“‘No marriage or giving in marriage?’ you say to me in rebuke. True; for how shall one dual being be married? Once, perchance, we were each in an individualized material form, which might or might not have been united one to the other; but here, as one element in a chemical combination rushes with irresistible force to join itself with another element that attracts it, so, without doubt, hesitancy, forethought, desire even, the spirit of our mate, our other half, rushes to mingle itself forever with us, in all the incontrovertible persistence of natural law.

“Nor are we capable of holding back, for every instinct of our being teaches us this is the only perfect immortality. We seek with joyous delight the one dear counterpart in

Scientific Spiritualism

whom can be no mistake, from whom we derive completion. Ah, exquisite contradiction and agreement within ourselves at once! She or he, he or she, what matters it—or if the male and female mingled into one, form a new creature with a new name, as John on Patmos saw! What harmony of human conception were worthy to celebrate it? Love was never yet written in words or told in story. Only the shadow of his bright presence ever illumined the earth-bound air.”

CHAPTER X

WHAT IS UNCONSCIOUS WILL ?

ALTHOUGH I am constantly gaining more faith in what is told me, still, ever since the Voices have begun to speak with me I have instinctively felt that I can bear no failure in their statements. When a seeming paradox has been given me I have not been mentally at rest until to my mind it has been clearly explained, and so I have, since the above writing, dwelt particularly on a sentence uttered some pages back, which troubled me as I wrote it, and which troubles me now. I therefore desire to demand an explanation of what is meant in the following :

“‘Attention is the basal quality of will. No one can will positively and successfully without first profoundly setting the mind on the object of desire. It is for this that we must be obedient to the law of attraction in our visits to you. Unless you have us in mind

What is Unconscious Will ?

sufficiently to consciously or *unconsciously* will us to come, we have no current whereby to approach you.'

"Now, I cannot comprehend the final sentence. First you say we must set our minds positively to work to accomplish anything, and then you say *unconsciously* attract. To will you to come is to consciously desire you to come ; and we cannot, so far as I can see, 'unconsciously' will anything. Attention being the basal quality of will, how can anything be willed unconsciously?"

"You are in your present condition made up of two bodies. You have a physical body with its brain, and a spiritual body with its soul. Now, in the every-day life that surrounds you, you intelligently will this or that and accomplish your will by setting your attention on the object and then proceeding to action. But at the same time the invisible life of your spirit is going on with its own functions and powers, and the spirit of you being the dominant force of you, it often wills in a way of which you, as a physical being, are un-

As It is to Be

aware. Do you think spirit begins only when your body dies? Do you think that when your body dies your spirit is newly born? Do you think that all the while your body grows, and your intellect develops, your spirit lies dormant, waiting for you to get through with your material form before it clothes you with a spiritual form?"

"Why, yes, and no. I think it is usual to imagine that we become a spirit when we cease to be a living being. Still, I am not unaware of the theory that the physical form and intellect are pervaded by a spiritual form and soul, distinct in itself, so that when the body lies dead it flees away intact."

"It is not a theory; it is a fact. And what do you think that this spirit which pervades you is doing all the time that you grow and progress?"

"The idea that I am double is so new to me that I cannot say."

"Let me illustrate to you: Did you ever have a presentiment that came true?"

"Yes, and a good many that did not."

What is Unconscious Will?

“Did you ever have an intuition that proved correct?”

“Yes, and a good many that did not.”

“Did you ever suffer unrest, remorse, doubts, fears, which sometimes proved baseless, but often proved the results of an outside cause of which you were at the time ignorant?”

“Yes, of course, every one has.”

“The inner workings of your mind are your spiritual growth, and, with your spirit ever busy, many unconscious desires, predilections, tendencies, go on, and we may unconsciously be desired to come to you by that spirit, who also rules you in many things of which you are not practically cognizant.

“The senses of the spirit, even while attached to an envelope of flesh, are infinitely finer than the senses of the body; and many times when you seem to hear truth with your physical ears, and see truth with your physical eyes, and touch truth with your physical hands, your spirit tells you without words, in what you call intuitions, that it is falsehood that

As It is to Be

you hear, see, or touch. Have you not many a time touched the hand of a stranger and felt an inward distrust, repulsion, even loathing of him or her?"

"Yes."

"Have you not listened to arguments so plausible that a philosopher could not combat them, uttered with inimitable persuasion and eloquence, and, during it all, has not your spirit told you it was all a fraud and warned you to keep aloof?"

"Oh, many times."

"Did you attribute these warnings to your own active and dominant spirit?"

"No. I attributed them respectively to reason and intuition."

"What is intuition?"

"I should say it was the instantaneous perception of a truth without any basis of reason to stand upon."

"And I should say it was the opening of the faculties of the spirit, while yet in the body, to the universal truth and knowledge which pervades the true spiritual atmosphere."

What is Unconscious Will?

“Still, as I answered you, my intuitions are not infallible.”

“Certainly not. No spirit is infallible, no matter how high he has reached. Only God is infallible. How, then, could one expect the earth-bound, flesh-enveloped germ of spirit to give infallible instructions, however much they may be relied upon, above many of the ordinary conclusions of the senses?”

“Then, coming back to the original question, man does at times unconsciously will, by means of that invisible spirit of his that pervades him?”

“He certainly does. But as was suggested the other day when you discussed this point, here is a much simpler solution. You love your mother dearly, and she is far away in Bermuda. If you had your way you would join her forty times a day or desire her to join you. Your souls are in perfect harmony, and nothing she does or you do would be uninteresting to the other.

“Now, practically, your reason and intelligence tell you that it is useless for you to con-

As It is to Be

sciously will your mother to come to you. Therefore you do not form in words the thought: 'I wish mother were here. Oh, if mother could be here to join me in this!' You put aside any conscious willing of her to come, as impracticable. But all the time your spirit does actually seek hers. Dominating your action, it leads you to avoid what she would dislike, and to do what she would approve. The longing in you to be with her is in its way an unconscious longing, because your whole mind seems taken up with affairs, but after all, the love in you, the eternal idea, which nothing can obliterate, calls and calls to her spirit; and were she a pure spirit, were her physical being dead — that physical form which holds her on the Island of Bermuda — she would be with you in the twinkling of an eye. And were you both dead as to your bodies, your union, even from the end of mortal-imagined space, would put the lightning flash to shame.

"Thus it is that you sometimes unconsciously attract us. The very fact of your mind dwell-

What is Unconscious Will?

ing on spiritual subjects and making pure truth the object of your warmest enthusiasm is an attraction of itself. The very fact that you seldom move either among men or amid the scenes of Nature without applying a spiritual and eternal significance to your observations, is another 'unconscious attraction,' of which you may not be aware.

“Again, every soul which aspires to God as the chief end and aim of existence ; every soul who loves God deeply, constantly, and fervently, calls to itself, holds and commands invisible powers and harmonies of which its earth-bound imagination cannot dream. Every fervent prayer for light, for truth, for righteousness, is an unconscious willing of forces which make for the causes you advocate. Were you conscious of that ?”

“I am wholly and perfectly answered. I have no more to say.”

CHAPTER XI

MORTAL MIND

THE Voices now seemed to me to be very exalted spirits, yet I felt sweetly familiar with them. I asked, "Can you tell me what kind of power it is which produces raps, table-tippings, footsteps, closed doors opened, and indeed such phenomena as are always caused by some invisible agent?"

"It is an elemental power."

"What kind of a power is that?"

"Material."

"You mean that it is not a spiritual power?"

"Yes."

"But these manifestations seem intelligent. The raps and taps answer questions and tell things unknown to those manipulating them, or rather, questioning them."

Mortal Mind

“Nevertheless, the power is a material force, manifested by means of material.”

“Can a material force be intelligent?”

“No, but a mortal mind can control a material force so as to make it perform phenomena.”

“Do you mean to say that spirits do not communicate by means of these phenomena?”

“No; spirits sometimes do, but never in the way you were thinking — mischievously.”

“What is it, then, that thus communicates mischievously?”

“Mortal mind.”

“You mean that the phenomena are the results of will?”

“Yes, will and imagination. The strongest will, magnetically considered, in a number of people gathered to see such things, generally controls the current, and if there be any intelligent communications, he or she consciously or unconsciously produces it, more usually unconsciously, as few ‘mediums’ understand their own powers, and many erroneously attribute to spirits qualities which they possess solely within themselves.”

As It is to Be

“How do you account for the message which I received from my dead father, which was written on a slate cleaned by me and closed by another slate, with nothing between them, which I held at arm’s length and which no one else touched?”

“We know how that was done. He did it.”

“Who did it?”

“Your father did it. But there was nothing evil in it, was there?”

“Quite the contrary. It was all good.”

“Well, good messages are often given by real spirits in various ways. But bad and mischievous things are never written, spoken, nor acted by spirits. It is impossible. All evil is material and mortal.”

“Spiritualists always, everywhere, claim that they know there are evil spirits as well as good. Take that Mrs. C——, that bright, good woman. You cannot convince her that there are not evil spirits, for she has seen and talked with them.”

“No, she has not. Her imagination may

Mortal Mind

have produced such a delusion, but she was under the influence of mortal mind, not of spiritual fact."

"How is one to discriminate between imagination, illusion, and truth?"

"Keep strictly to the rule :

‘ If it be good it *may* be spirit —
If it be bad it *cannot* be spirit.’ ”

"What are apparitions?"

"They are emanations of material from spirit."

"Emanations?"

"Yes, they are the spirit idea made manifest in material."

"They emanate from spirit?"

"Yes; but mind you, they are not imbued with actual spirit. They are mere shadows, projections; they are not actual spirits."

"In this town an old woman was frequently seen lying on her bed after she had long been dead and buried. Now, what was that?"

"Her strong idea of herself as being there, manifested in material, shadowlike, but made

As It is to Be

up of actual particles, — the emanation of her spirit.”

“So ghosts are real things?”

“Yes, and so real that they are chemically combined as much as you are, only they are not permanent appearances.”

“Why do ‘ghosts’ haunt the earth?”

“Because the immortal mind behind them haunts the earth, attracted, perhaps, by an eager desire to atone for some wrong; or it may be it is attracted to and longs for the old places or some place so strongly as to actually become materialized for a more or less time, more or less often. Usually a disturbed condition of the brain at death is the initial reason for such re-appearances.

“Sudden death, great anxiety, some most important thing left undone, will frequently distract the good of the spirit which comes here from an upward progress, and hold it by its attraction earth-bound for some time, or until satisfaction is achieved.”

“But do not these ghosts often do mischief and cause evil?”

Mortal Mind

"No. They may cause fright. Anything 'abnormal,' as you would call it, would do that."

"Do they never beat or bruise, or set fire, or do any kind of evil, as flinging things about the house, or making unbearable noises, and in two words, do they not take delight in making 'a row'?"

"No. Every one of those things you have mentioned is caused by mortal mind.

"Some person within reasonable distance of the manifestation is full of magnetic qualities, which show themselves by currents projected and acting on material, as the mind of the person works. They often are harmless and as often harmful, since evil or good currents may be thrown out consciously or unconsciously. There are invisible causes as well as visible operating in Nature. Mind expresses itself quite frequently by magnetic currents acting upon material."

"Could I make a double rap on my door?"

"No; but a very strong medium could, and still not know it was he or she who did it.

As It is to Be

Usually such things are attributed to the action of spirits, but most often falsely."

"Then, if I sat in a circle and heard distinct raps on my chair, knowing nobody could touch it, what would it be?"

"A magnetic current, impinging suddenly upon the wood. It would probably be thrown there from the mind of some one present. Mind dominates matter. Remember that. Some minds of a peculiar quality have developed the power of manifestation in material, and although they themselves may believe it is done by outside spirits, I reiterate that almost all of those experiments are done through and by mortal mind. Spirits may, but do not often, communicate by such means. Words, thoughts, impressions, not raps, taps, twanging and pounding of instruments, are the true means of message from our world to yours. If in the rarest case such a method becomes necessary, you may rest assured the communication is very important and always for good."

"That does put a new phase upon the

Mortal Mind

affair. Who ever dreamed before that one can actually move a table by willing it to move ?”

“Many have discovered their power. In olden days what was called the ‘Black Magician’ knew how to manipulate material and he could accomplish more or less surprising feats by means of his magnetism, which he cultivated and conserved. It is not physical magnetism alone, but a magnetism of the mind, the spirit, which is necessary for the actual manipulation of material without contact. Unfortunately, as long as the spirit is still mortal mind, or enveloped in a covering of flesh, the material element may predominate, and evil things be done. However, very few persons possess, or if they do possess, know how to use this natural power, so not much evil is done by it.”

“I know that one mortal mind may dominate another mortal mind.”

“Yes, and no end of evil is worked in that way. Spiritualists are too prone to attribute to spirits everything unusual. Thus they say

As It is to Be

that people may be obsessed by an evil spirit. Nothing could be more false. A person may be hypnotized by a bad mortal mind and thus be actually obsessed by that mind, but there never was a person yet obsessed by any spirit outside of an envelope of flesh. A man or woman may obsess or hypnotize another person and cause them to do any and every possible evil. But no spirit can."

"But obsessed people claim that they see or hear a bad spirit!"

"So do mesmerized people declare that they are freezing or burning if their mesmerizer tells them to! The imagination is at the mercy of the hypnotizer, and one might see an angel or a devil if so willed."

"Are many people affected by hypnotists?"

"Almost every one during a lifetime has some such experience, although both the hypnotizer and his subject may be utterly unconscious of the processes and influences that are at work between them."

CHAPTER XII

PUNISHMENT

LAST evening I began to talk with the Voices, and we had the following conversation :

“I often wonder how Heaven can be Heaven if we cannot have our own things with us. What a disappointment it would be to an enthusiastic collector of paintings to be obliged to give them all up forever when he had secured just what he wanted! Now, in my own case, shall I not miss my possessions? For instance, I have just been arranging my books, as perhaps you know. I find I have over seven hundred, and I believe they are every one of them dear to me. I make constant use of them. Heigho! I suppose when I go to you that will be the end of it. You don't have books there, I suppose?”

As It is to Be

“Not actual books, no.”

“Don’t you read, then?”

“Oh! yes, we read, but we are not obliged to have actual books before us, as you do.”

“Oh! I know. You mean that the idea of the book existed before it was written or printed, and so you read the idea. But there are a good many objections to that, I should say. An author’s mind is in a state of chaos, as it were, in compiling his ideas for a book; it is a process — he writes, scratches out, fills in, and is never done changing until he finishes the last proof. It would be rather tedious, I fancy, to follow the ramifications of his ideas. What we want is the finished work, and usually not half of that.”

“Well, you can have what you want, and you cannot have what you do not want, here, so I should think you would be satisfied. You have what you are attracted to, and you don’t have the rest thrust upon you. As for reading your books, it is not necessary for you, when a spirit, to be with them. You can read them a million miles off as well as you

Punishment

can read them when before you. You can read them here, there, or anywhere."

"Do you mean that what I have once read is forever retained and can be recalled to memory at will when in the spiritual state?"

"Absolutely so."

"And what about books that I have never read at all, but which I should like to read?"

"They all exist for your pleasure and profit, and your mind will take them in whenever you choose, wherever you choose."

"The magnificent library of Alexandria was destroyed by fire," I said wistfully.

"Are you sure? But material fire cannot destroy spiritual facts. The Alexandrian library is still as accessible to us as ever."

"And the Alexandrian authors also?" I cried. "Oh! what a thought."

"Yes," said the Voice, as if smiling.

"But see here. How could I read the Alexandrian library? Why, I took up a Greek lexicon last night and became so interested in the English definitions and explana-

As It is to Be

tions ; but they were so constantly interlarded with Latin and Greek that I gave it up in despair. How, then, could I read books in foreign languages ? Does changing from the material into the spiritual form give one a royal road to learning ? ”

“ It should be a royal road for the daughter of the king, certainly, and it is. We have a universal language. ”

“ Is it Greek ? ”

“ No. ”

“ Then what good will it do when I wish to know Greek ? ”

“ Language in form, tone, symbol, is of human and material invention. It is the universal language shattered into parts. The universal language contains all languages, and is the root and crown of all idioms and diversifications. We, who know the root of all languages, have no difficulty in comprehending the different branches. Does not the tree know its own fruitage ? ”

“ This will be a joy to scholars. ”

“ Heaven is joy. ”

Punishment

“But out of Heaven, or before one gets there? Is there an *out* of Heaven?”

“The preachers say so.”

“I know it. It troubles my soul, for I see no answer to it. You say sin and evil are wholly material and cannot enter the spiritual existence. What, then, of a man wholly given over to sin?”

“No man is wholly given over to sin. God is in him, more or less.”

“Well, supposing we say less — less to the utmost degree — what becomes of him?”

“Do you mean to take the extreme case?”

“Yes, the most extreme case possible.”

“He becomes a germ.”

“A germ!”

“A spiritual germ, answering to material protoplasm. It is from this rare phenomenon — for it is a spiritual phenomenon, it is so rare — that men have caught the notion of annihilation. They knew instinctively that there was such a thing as apparent annihilation, and out of this soul-consciousness has arisen the formulated idea. But the germ is

As It is to Be

never annihilated. It may remain dormant indefinitely — we cannot say how long, it is in the decree of God — but He eventually vivifies it and it begins its career of progress. Being spiritual, its progress is proportionately rapid.”

“I cannot see any punishment to the wicked in this. If the germ lies unconscious, but heaven and eternity are still before it, I cannot see how its sins are of any practical disadvantage to it, or cause it either remorse or suffering.”

“Who told you that human beings were created to suffer?”

“Justice. Wrong must right itself. The wicked must be redeemed out of their wickedness; the evil must be purged out of their natures.”

“But why by suffering?”

“Because they have made others suffer.”

“Oh! an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. You are Jewish, then?”

“No, just.”

“And merciful?”

Punishment

“ Yes, merciful, for if there were no punishment for evil, evil would overrun the earth. Civilization would be in ruins.”

“ Don’t you punish your criminals ? ”

“ Yes, when we can catch them.”

“ You have caught them and punished them enough to save civilization from ruin, have n’t you ? ”

“ Yes, I suppose we have.”

“ And Nature severely punishes all sins against her, does she not ? ”

“ Yes, sometimes to the third and fourth generation, innocent though they be.”

“ Society condemns petty evils also, does it not ? There is a punishment for even the awkwardness of the boor, is there not, — in derision, or sneers, or laughs, or avoidance ?

“ Look over the world and count your punishments. After that look into the world’s conscience and count its secret punishments. Do you not think there is enough punishment right where you are, without our importing it into our peaceful country ? ”

“ You are teaching me a dangerous doc-

As It is to Be

trine. The fear of future punishment of some sort is one of the strong links that bind society together. Let it be known that there is no remorse, no suffering, no sorrow in the after-life, but merely the being born again into a new and safe and sweet condition — let it be known and believed, I say, and the statistics of suicide would be overwhelming, while crime would ride rampant over our heads. The law of love may do in Heaven, but not on earth.”

“Then you think love and mercy cannot eliminate evil. You believe justice and suffering only can bring a man to a realizing sense of his misdeeds. Unless he suffers what he has made others suffer, either mentally or physically, he cannot appreciate the extent of the misery he has caused, or desire to cease to inflict it, or rise to better things? For you, if a man causes a man to be burnt at the stake, he should also be burnt at the stake. If a man torments his wife with a thousand petty, mean, miserable misdeeds and words, he should be subjected to exactly the same experience.

Punishment

“If she retaliates she should be retaliated upon to the degree she strikes, and so on endlessly. This is a pleasant picture. Will you please tell us whom you have appointed to be your universal sheriff in the spiritual world?”

“I don’t know. I cannot say. I must only think that in justice we should reap the fruit of our misdeeds, good or evil.”

“Alas! child, how blindly you speak. How little you value the power of words. Reap the fruit of your deeds! What was the fruit of Napoleon’s deeds? Were not the nations of the earth influenced? Were not whole peoples changed? Did not he make a million widows and orphans? Did not he sweep the world with his sword? Did he not scourge nations as with a whip, yet, after all, were they not purified as with a flame? Are not the fruits of his deeds endless? Have not you eaten them? And will you heap this whirlwind of suffering all upon the devoted head of Napoleon? Can you say whether or not he was a minister of the Divine Will? Yet heap the ‘fruits of his deeds’

As It is to Be

upon him! 'Tit for tat,' that is the course of your justice, untempered by mercy and love. See where it leads you! There is no justice in it all. It resolves itself into fiendish cruelty."

"What is the spiritual law, then?"

"We have told you. Cultivate spirituality, goodness, mercy, love. These, crowned by faith, hope, and charity, make the elements of eternal life. More or less so you will be, as you possess them, and if so little as to be merely a germ, thus missing glories unutterable, still, under the sun and dew of God's love, you will finally begin to develop, progress, and rise."

"Do we remember our misdeeds?"

"Yes, you remember everything. In contrast, you see what you might have been. Every attribute of your nature now longs for good and abhors evil. Your whole aspiration is to be in harmony with God, and the remembrance that you were ever out of harmony with Him is an exquisite pain that only final perfection will eliminate, — a pain with an

Punishment

eternal hope in it, to be sure, but full of realization."

"I cannot answer you at times. You strike me dumb with my own blindness, if I can use such a term. And the strange thing is that when you answer me exactly contrarily to what I anticipated, I am convinced of your truth the moment you utter it. You are infinitely persuasive. I must believe you, whether I will or no.

"I have been thinking," I continued, "about the great gulf fixed, 'so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass from thence to us, that would come thence,' which, in the Gospel of St. Luke, is spoken of by Abraham. Between the Heaven and hell spoken of there, it appears there is no passing. Dives was in anguish, and Lazarus, in Abraham's bosom, in happiness. One could not go to the other. What does it mean? What truth is there in it?"

"There is no spiritual truth in it at all. It is a fable,—a story written years and years before Christ. He is supposed to have told

As It is to Be

it, but He did not. If you will look at the chapter carefully, you will see that this story neither begins nor ends with any allusion to the Christ. He ends His speech by speaking of adultery, and instantly, without any connection whatever, this Jewish fable is introduced, and the next chapter goes on without any application, or lesson, or moral drawn from the story, by Christ speaking of 'offences.' The tale is 'old as the hills,' and is of human conception entirely, like a thousand other myths.

"Remember the compilers of the New Testament had very many old manuscripts to select from, and they put the life of the Saviour together in a very bungling fashion. This had nothing to do with Him."

"Christ was either inspired or not inspired, either true or false, divine or human. If He said there was a hell, He certainly believed it, and if He was inspired and divine, it was true."

"Not necessarily. You must remember that Jesus was the son of a woman. He was human.

Punishment

He said He was the Son of Man. He may have been dual, but certainly He was both inspired and not inspired ; both human and divine. Actuated by two natures, His teachings may have varied with them. Doubtless He believed all He taught. But His intellect, training, education, custom, habit — all these influences may have told upon His opinions. He never claimed to be infallible ; it was His followers who came after Him that did that."

"May have, may have — why do you say 'may have' ? Don't you *know* whether Christ is divine, the Son of God, after living in the spiritual Heaven a thousand years ? "

"No."

"I should think, then, that your information on any subject would not be reliable. If you, who have been in Heaven so long, cannot tell me anything about the Saviour, how shall I trust what you may affirm ? Why cannot you tell me of this most important thing ? "

"THE ALMIGHTY VEIL IS DRAWN BEFORE HIS FACE. WE FEEL, BUT WE DO NOT SEE

As It is to Be

THE GODHEAD. I CANNOT SAY IF WITHIN THE GODHEAD EXISTS A CHRIST. I KNOW I HAVE NEVER SEEN HIM OUT OF IT."

"Christ said: 'The pure in heart shall see God.'"

"True, but He did not say how long it would be before they should see Him, nor designate when."

"I think that believers in Christianity look forward to seeing Jesus at once, and if they could not imagine Him as to be seen in a human form, recognizable as their human Saviour, they would be disappointed beyond words."

"Let them ask themselves if they comply with the condition — a pure heart. On considering that, they may be willing to modestly wait until called."

"But a thousand years!"

"And does that seem so long to you? Yet remember, to Him a thousand years are but as one day."

"Is there such a thing as spiritual blindness in your world, — such spiritual blindness as

Punishment

to exclude from the spirit the light and joy of Heaven ? ”

“No.”

“What truth is there in Swedenborg’s statement that some people, after death, are still so wilfully evil that spiritual truths cannot be imparted to them ? ”

“There is no truth in it. The statement is founded on his belief in a hell, and the eternal degradation of some spirits, which belief is utterly false.”

“But there must be spiritual ignorance ! How is that dealt with ? ”

“With tender mercy. As we have told you, the spiritually ignorant are simply undeveloped spirits who need and receive teaching and enlightenment. Some are more quick to learn than others, but none are utterly blind. The receptive faculty may be dormant and *unsunned*, as one might say, but how long do you suppose it can remain dormant in our atmosphere ? ”

“But if the will of the spirit is *opposed* to enlightenment ? Take a thoroughly evil man,

As It is to Be

who has always been selfish, ignorant, obstinate, tyrannical, cruel, and self-conceited. He thinks he knows it all. He does n't think anybody can enlighten him. He scoffs at angelic wisdom, and would laugh any one to scorn as an old foggy who would try to inform him that he is living on a low, unworthy plane, unfit for his future destiny. What can you do with a wilful fellow like that? I have seen such."

"He leaves his selfishness, obstinacy, tyranny, cruelty and self-conceit behind him when he comes here. His ignorance is not an evil, so he still remains so. But ignorance is not wicked. Then, although ignorant, he also brings whatever good quality he did possess, one or more. Now, as soon as the selfishness, obstinacy, tyranny, cruelty, and self-conceit are taken out of him, it leaves him with a residue of a few kind impulses, gentle acts, transient sympathies, and generous thoughts, perhaps, which give us ground to work upon, and him a tendency towards good. He is now in an atmosphere in harmony with good, which is a law, acting with the same unerring force as the

Punishment

law of gravitation in the natural world. He gravitates towards good in spite of himself, just as a ball dropped from a tower gravitates towards the earth in spite of itself.

“The immense attraction of the Sun of Righteousness draws and holds all spirits towards good, even as the sun of your physical world holds and draws all planets towards itself. The result is, that having shed those evil qualities he had with the body, he keeps only the spiritual qualities he attained and developed, and by our ministrations and God’s attractive force, he inevitably tends upward and onward. *No soul is exempt from this law.*”

“Wherein comes the theory of free-will, then?”

“Man has free-will only to a limited extent. He has never been given free-will enough to absolutely destroy himself. As regards his own final destiny, he has no free-will, either on earth or hereafter. He has free-will to the extent of non-development of his own spiritual powers, and can carry it to such an extent that the angels look with pitying

As It is to Be

horror upon his obstinate depravity; but do what he will, he cannot kill out within himself the indestructible germ of spirit, which is immortal and eternal, and which, after a certain series of vicissitudes, will inevitably develop and come to ultimate perfection."

"Are those vicissitudes full of pain, misery, agony? Do they in any imaginable form resemble passing through a hell?"

"No."

"Do they resemble in any way a punishment, remedial or otherwise?"

"They do in this sense: the spirit, now deprived of all tendency to evil, is yet conscious of his past, the opportunities he has missed, the joys he might have had and won, and the approval of God which might have been his.

"WE ACTUALLY HANG WITH ECSTATIC DELIGHT UPON THE APPROVAL OF GOD. THERE IS NOTHING IN HEAVEN OR ON EARTH WHICH WE WOULD NOT SUFFER, DO, GIVE, OFFER, SACRIFICE, TO GAIN IT. IT IS THE VERY BREATH OF OUR EXISTENCE.

"If we feel the least disapproval of any act,

Punishment

thought, feeling, or other emotion, which we cannot explain to you, because there are spiritual emotions of which no mortal ever dreamed, we are so exquisitely sensitive to it that it is as harsh and agonizing to our spiritual senses as a stone would be in your eye.

“We love God so utterly, and know His judgment and criticism to be so unapproachably pure, that to offend Him, or rather to grieve Him, is an unspeakable pain, a sorrow that is nothing like your earthly sorrow for intensity, yet parallels it when you have really wronged and hurt one whom you would give your life to please.

“Well, this new-comer, such as you have described, having entered this realm of spiritual emotion, partakes of all our feelings, and being now terribly aware of his ill-spent years, his shortcomings, his neglect of truth and right, *his spiritual deformity in the midst of ineffable beauty*, so infinitely desires the forgiveness and approval of God that even Heaven cannot charm him until that harmony is established.”

As It is to Be

“And does God forgive him? And does he get into harmony?”

“Eventually.”

“By what means does he gain it?”

“By blotting out, one by one, his transgressions, until his soul is purified and white and innocent as a child’s.”

“How is that done?”

“He seeks every soul, every animate thing, beast or human, that he has ever wronged in thought, word, or deed, and humbly tries to repair that wrong, gain forgiveness for that cruelty, receive in penitence and contriteness of heart whatever just penalty is imposed, and offers himself over and over again as a repentant soul, seeking to do all he can to undo all the wickedness of his earth-life.

“To accomplish this he must sometimes wait until he can meet his enemy, or the one he has wronged, face to face, and that cannot be until that wronged soul has come itself into Heaven. Years may pass before the explanation, the pleading, can take place; but in time every sentient thing, including every insect

Punishment

even, which he wilfully hurt from selfish or idle pleasure, or gratification of a mere animal instinct to kill or slay unnecessarily, yields its forgiveness, not in actual words, but in a way understood by his spirit. And at last he is free from stain, free from dark spots which spoil the immortal beauty of his spiritual form."

"And then God forgives him, too, and takes him into harmony?"

"WHEN MAN FORGIVES HIS OWN SOUL, GOD ALSO FORGIVES HIM, FOR GOD AND HE IN ESSENCE ARE ONE. THEN IS HARMONY."

"As no person is without these stains and blemishes of character in word, thought, and deed, all must go through this very process, I suppose."

"More or less, yes. But before death many go through the process while yet within their natural bodies. They think over their sins with such true and perfect penitence, and would so fully repent and atone were their physical condition compatible, that they go

As It is to Be

through the purifying fire of remorse while yet on earth, and enter here in the possession of divine peace. The repentance and atonement upon earth is a quicker, better, and nobler process than the long and minute discipline to which the soul is subjected here.

“God sees the heart. Nothing can hide the truth from Him. He is within the heart and knows its every beat. There can be no hypocrisy, glossing over, palliating, or excusing to that inner spirit which you all know is within you. And if, before death, by any means, you can become honestly at peace and forgiven to yourselves by yourselves, you may consider that you have accomplished your forgiveness, which is God’s. Your own souls are your own judges. You *cannot* forgive yourselves until you are worthy.”

“And until we do forgive ourselves Heaven itself cannot give us joy?”

“Heaven will give you sympathy, tenderness, courage, instruction, and all manner of help. You will not be left alone to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, but

Punishment

you will be one of a great multitude, all busy at the same task, some just beginning, some far advanced, some emancipated and rejoicing with great joy.

“And another thing, the task is not hopeless. You know you will accomplish it, and the eagerness with which you set about purifying yourself will be as wings to your feet.”

“What a glorious and just law! I am amenable to it. I welcome it. I will forever abide in its belief, and, so help me God, I will begin now to wipe out my stains.”

“Well done, my child.”

“Some say there is no probation after death. We are judged by the deeds done in the body and if we do not come up to the standard we are condemned forthwith.”

“We do not use the word ‘probation’ in that sense at all. Your probation simply means that you are rooting your spiritual nature, and when it is strong enough to shoot up into the full sunshine you will begin to grow, under new and wholly favorable conditions.”

“So this is all the hell there is?”

As It is to Be

“ This is all.”

“ There is something yet, however, about which I am troubled. Here is a loving Christian mother in harmony with God. Her son is wicked beyond expression. Both die. One becomes an angel, full of angelic powers ; the other becomes an infant, a mere germ, lying dormant indefinitely. Does not the angel suffer in seeing her son lie deaf and dumb to Heaven’s glories ? ”

“ No. She becomes his sun and dew. She is the minister to his salvation. Were he dead, she might mourn, but she knows he liveth, and that the evil that wrung her heart on earth is all done away with forever. ‘ Rejoice ! ’ she cries, ‘ ye saints, ye angel host, for my son who was dead is alive again ; the lost is found.’ ”

CHAPTER XIII

SPIRITS DO NOT TEMPT — THE CELESTIAL BODY

“**T**HERE is a dreadful thing taught by spiritualists — so dreadful, indeed that I can hardly bear to think of it — to the effect that mortals are sometimes taken possession of by wicked spirits, who lead them into all sorts of evils ; as, for instance, morphine eating. A person who died a morphine eater has the power to renew his vice through the medium of some unfortunate sensitive, and so fill him with a desire for morphine that he, too, shall involuntarily become a morphine eater to gorge the invisible appetite that preys upon him. Or perhaps some poor fellow born with an hereditary thirst dies a drunkard, and then in the spirit continuing to long for stimulants, fastens like a leech upon some other poor mortal, and leads

As It is to Be

him astray. I wish to know if there is any truth whatever in this horrible doctrine."

"We are astonished by the pranks of the human imagination, and were it possible for celestial beings to be angry, we should indignantly deny so base and unworthy an imputation upon the Almighty justice and honor.

"Away with such liars, such hypocrites, who, to excuse a vile passion, try to thrust the responsibility upon beings whose whole existence towards them is, and can but be, only beneficent and exalting !

"Shame on the cowards who dare not own to the unrestrained evil within them ! There are many who claim to be mediums and clairvoyants, who promulgate ideas which are absolutely false. Their ignorance has helped a belief which is full of corruption, misunderstanding, and superstition. No, wholly no ! Man was not made to be the unconscious prey of beings more powerful than himself; the slave of invisible spirits whose sole business is to ruin him. Nor could his Maker subject him to such an insult to his moral

Spirits do not Tempt

nature. Whatever exists of passion in man is his own and no other's, and to answer for it he, and he alone, will be compelled."

"How about the demons, spirits, and devils that Jesus cast out?"

"Men called hysteria, insanity, nervous prostration, illness of any peculiar form, a devil, for they knew little enough of anatomy or physiology. In fact, their vocabulary did not include words which would in any proper way designate a disease. The Christ was a natural healer, possessed of refined spiritual powers. His magnetism healed the sick. Their faith, which, you will remark, He always insisted upon and commended, helped the recovery. They were physically ill. He cast out neither spirit nor devil."

"Then we may fear no intrusion of spirits or impressions unwelcome to us?"

"Your independence and solitude are as secure as if you were the King of kings. Your own spiritual will, the highest and divinest part of you alone, can attract a spirit to your presence, and if it be that you demand entire

As It is to Be

exemption from any approach or intercourse whatever, you have but to become conscious merely that such is your desire, and no wind that ever blew could drive us fast enough away to satisfy us, and fulfil the law of repulsion."

"I would like to ask you more about the germ. Although the germ of spiritual life is all that enters your atmosphere from an almost wholly evil individuality, does it assume a celestial body, or does it remain undeveloped even as to its envelopment?"

"There is in your imagination a certain form which you wish me to say belongs to the angelic race, and you think, by questioning thus, that you will ascertain whether you are correct. But I cannot describe to you a celestial body. Youth, age, childhood, infancy, are terms which convey to your mind different phases of earthly images, the image of the Creator, and so you marvel if an 'infant' in spiritual life looks like a little human, sucking, smiling baby.

"You think of your dear old grandfather

Spirits do not Tempt

with his silvery locks, and wonder if he will be the first to meet you, looking so familiarly, just as when he sat in his chair by the fireplace. You think of young people who have passed on, and wonder if they retain their youth. It is a great and puzzling question to you and to all who think about it. 'Shall we see our friends again as we knew them here? If not, we shall be so sorry, so disappointed.'

"Now, for your present comfort, I will say that when you come to us, gently borne upon the current of Heavenly will, you will find nothing to frighten you or render you otherwise than perfectly at ease. If it occurs to you to think of your friends at first and to wish for them, it will not be an instant before you see them, just as you expect to see them or desire to see them. But this will not and cannot last. The development in spiritual vision which will come to you will change you, and in changing, you will no longer desire to see your beloved ones as you knew them. Satisfied with them at first, you would become deeply dissatisfied if, while changing

As It is to Be

yourself into the new and celestial form, they remained as of old. For mingled in one supreme and beautiful whole, are infancy, childhood, youth, middle age, and age, rounded and full in those who experienced all of these, and exquisitely anticipative in those who did not pass childhood and youth.

“Like the bud, the half-blown rose, the rose in its perfumed splendor, each beautiful and perfect in its stage, are those beings who, not any more assuming the indefiniteness of change, as in earthly life, are at all times perfect as to form, according to the glory within them. Ask not, then, to know whether the germ or the saint has a celestial body. Believe that no language could describe to you what no eye of mortal hath seen. Rest satisfied that no one shall be dissatisfied in this land of satisfaction, where every pure craving of a tender soul meets with its exquisite and divine fulfilment out of the unutterable bounty of God.”

CHAPTER XIV

OPPOSING CREEDS

OVER the beauty of the foregoing communication I happily dwelt for the day. I wore it upon my heart like a new jewel. And, by the way, once suddenly I heard the Voices say: "Love which you mortals send to us spirits takes the semblance of jewels. Your love for your dear friend burns like a ruby on her breast and flames out when you think of her." But this morning, on thinking of the *one hundred and one* sects — "the two and seventy jarring sects," as Omar Khayyam hath it — of this too jarring world, I thought I would ask the Voices what becomes of opposite opinions in the land of light.

"Opposite opinions are harmonized in one comprehension of truth. Where knowledge

As It is to Be

is, can be no argument. Your creed-makers all agree that there is a sun. Here they know there is a Sun of Righteousness, and harmony with Him is the only admissible creed."

"Yes, but error of opinion must exist somewhere. You say a man takes his memory with him. Well, he dies a Calvinist, while his neighbor dies a Methodist, and their friend died a Roman Catholic. Each was good, each a Christian, but each remembers what he was. How can they get over it? How can the Catholic help believing that absolution is necessary to salvation? How can the Calvinist help believing in election? How can the Methodist help believing in the necessity for conversion? They think these are essential points in the scheme of salvation, and that he who does not accept them is lost. I have a relative to-day who honestly believes, because I have never joined any church nor become 'converted,' that I shall inevitably be separated from her eternally in the hereafter. She begs me with great tenderness to be a Christian, while I am satisfied to say that

Opposing Creeds

I am just a lover of God. What can harmonize all these opposing beliefs?"

"In the first place, they all come here," said the Voice. "That answers it as far as hell, purgatory, and everlasting punishment are concerned. Then they see among them people who professed no creed at all. Enlightenment, like a beam, creeps into the dark crevices of their minds, hitherto filled with the prejudices of inheritance, education, custom. Charity, broadening the intellect and inflaming the heart with universal sympathy, softly sweeps away from their souls the clouds of intellectual error. Love, all-surrounding, all-commanding, shows them the vanity of formula, the selfishness of dogma, the pride of theologic wile, the obstinacy of human prejudice, the sanctity of Right for its own sake, the overwhelming No, uttered against non-conformity to a universal creed including all intelligent beings, and proportioning to each his share of glory as the pure goodness of his heart deserves.

"It is not, it cannot be, a matter of organi-

As It is to Be

zation, election, foreordination, atonement, baptism, conversion, which 'elects,' and 'chooses,' and 'calls' men and women to a higher sphere. It is loving and worshipping the Father, loving and being kind to all fellow-creatures, dumb animals, and the wicked and the unfortunate alike; it is the right exercise of every power, the loyalty to honest purposes and high aims, the self-sacrifice for others, the ordering of life with a view to a nobler and better state of existence hereafter, which leads the soul on and up into a state of beatitude and bliss. Goodness! that is all the conversion needed to bring you here, and to profit by every advantage of Heaven.

"Be a heathen and love your highest ideal, the ideal which means God to you, even if it be a rock or a stick, and we will welcome you with the same joy, and God will grant you the same love, as if you sought Him before the altar of the most orthodox church."

"But the Congregationalists teach that we are all naturally depraved, and that, unless we can believe in Jesus Christ as the atonement

Opposing Creeds

for our sins, we cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven. 'There is no other name under Heaven,' you remember He said Himself, 'whereby you can approach the Father save through Me,' or words to that effect. How can you answer that?"

"By simply saying that whoever uttered those words in the flesh is now inevitably somewhere in the spirit, and if the Christ exists in the Godhead, do you doubt that He is as active now as He was two thousand years ago? Can He be blind and deaf to the cries of humanity? He holdeth the sickle in His hand, and reapeth the ripe grain of His ancient sowing. His ministering angel still bears His messages of peace to earth.

"Is not His name as potent, His will as strong, His compassion as tender, His consideration as deep, His comprehension as broad, and His love as perfect as when He condescended to tread your planet centuries ago? What do you suppose the dear Christ is doing all this time? Do you think His invisible in-

As It is to Be

fluence is not as persuasive as was His visible? Is the time gone by when He hath power to raise from the dead, to heal the sick, to rescue the perishing, to atone for the wicked? How know you, feeble and weak-sighted mortal that you are, what are the plans and intentions of One for every living soul to-day, or how His NAME, taking various forms in various consciousnesses, is not as much the Word to-day as in 33? If you see a stranger walk up the lane, and accost him, and he answers you in a foreign tongue, you feel he is an alien, a being not of your kind, like a bear or an elephant; he is different — you do not know him. Yet, if you look into his Arabian mind, for instance, you will find him at sacred moments worshipping God, and the dew of God's blessing resting on his forehead.

“Say the NAME to him; he may have heard it, but it is of no moment to him. Yet the NAME is at that moment written on his heart in some deed of righteousness that would put your petty sacrifices to shame.

“Be not narrow. He who came to save the

Opposing Creeds

world will save it, rest assured ; and if the savage who burns his ox-meat on some rudely constructed pile before an idol offers up the love and homage of his poor, ignorant nature as well as he knows how, do not think that he is forgotten, neglected, or despised, save of those churches who grant him and his ancestors a burning hell for the sole portion of their misfortunes, and no probation even for the innocent babe he carries on his rude but human bosom.

“ We cry out, we who watch the madness of the world, in longing to save it from itself. And cannot you trust Him who gave Himself to order things aright? Speak aloud, aye, shout the word ‘ Goodness ’ in the ears of men. There is a creed worth having, and the only one inclusive enough to hold The Spirit.”

“ Then whoever has been born into this world has an inalienable right to eternal life, and the varied theologies of men are but the outcome of the intellectual struggle for a true religious basis? ”

“ Yes. But outside of genuine goodness

As It is to Be

all creeds are chaff. It is by unity in goodness that men dwell here. The Incarnate Goodness is the universal Name that needeth no translation, for it is known among all nations and is the same in all tongues."

"In using the word 'incarnate' goodness, I suppose you mean the goodness done in the flesh by man to man as we know it, do you not? You are so careful in the use of words that I wish to make sure."

"Yes. I meant that goodness that is recognizable everywhere, and which is the reflection of the Source of goodness, even as a lake reflects the stars. Of the higher goodness I did not speak."

"Is there, then, a higher goodness, — a goodness greater than itself?"

"Aye; but it is above the comprehension of any creature of the soil."

"Ah, what a vista you open before me! What a hint of something unimagined, yet dimly recognized as possible!"

"Say no more. It is beyond."

CHAPTER XV

THE DUAL UNIT

“**M**AY I request you to explain a little about the dual unit to which you have alluded several times in the past? What kind of a union can it be which makes one person out of two? Are they personally joined together?”

“You mistake us if you think one person is made out of two to produce a dual unit. The individuality of each person is intact, but at the same time is imparted to its mate, so that there is complete union of being as to memory, experience, thought, tendency, taste, inspiration, intention, and goal.”

“Can you not illustrate this so that I can understand it more clearly?”

“The dual unit, the one made of two, masculine and feminine, when joined here, are as one being. Mark you, we do not say, are one

As It is to Be

being, as if a man and a woman were moulded, like a lump of clay, into a new form, but are as one being as to all spiritual essence. Each absorbs and holds the other — mingles, mixes with, resembles the other. All mutual or separate experiences are blended into harmony. If one was artistic, but lacked business qualities, the other would have business qualities and very likely not be artistic, but in the one being business and art would come together, and thus supplement each and make it perfect. Thus you see how beautifully God plans for His children. What one lacks the other will possess, provided that lack is necessary to be made up to form a harmonious union. God's secrets are always more lovely than the gifts He reveals."

"It is so seldom that people with genius here find a mate who appreciates them. Is not one of the chief sorrows of this world the result of mismating?"

"Never call a marriage a mismating. However it may affect either party, there was need of the experience by each. The idea that

The Dual Unit

people have a right to consider themselves free because a marriage is not congenial has led to more wrongs, errors, crimes, sensuality, and earthiness than many another seemingly greater evil."

"But supposing one of the partners is criminal, cruel, brutal?"

"That is another question, and comes under another head. It is not defined in the marriage law, either of earth or of heaven. It should be relegated to the criminal code, where it belongs, and its punishment should be the cutting the offender off from society, like a theft, a rape, an arson. What we allude to is the easy loosing of a bond which has simply become tiresome, distasteful, or filled with unpleasant duties. When it becomes unendurable, dragging both body and soul into low and disorganizing states, the experience has served its purpose and must legally be brought to a close."

"What is the advantage gained by a man of genius from being united to a commonplace, dull, unappreciative woman?"

As It is to Be

“Perhaps just the fretting of his soul. His struggle to lift her, or his pity or scorn of her incompetency, or his disappointment, casting him more and more upon his own resources, may draw out of his life harp-strains of immortal beauty which might never have sounded in the sweet but enervating society of one like himself.”

“And what is the advantage to the woman?”

“Association with genius; the society it draws around it. The hearing, even dully, noble and beautiful thoughts, or the seeing of grand pictures, or the absorbing of rich music, inevitably have their effect, even if not a visible one. Through the dull or almost dumb medium of the body, a growing soul may not make itself strongly manifest, her mind even may seem to shut itself in unresponsive silence; but always take into account that spirit of hers, which, pure, takes in only the good. Then you will see the mutual advantage of a seemingly unfortunate marriage.”

The Dual Unit

“How, then, ‘all things work together for good for those who love God’?”

“They certainly do, but should you not turn it the other way, and make it for those whom God loves? It is a poor rule that does not work both ways.”

“Ah! but would that quite do? It would mean everybody then, would it not? For none would dare say that God does not love all His children.”

“Well, if you take all who love God, and all whom God loves, you make a perfect rule perfectly applicable to all. And as the sun shines on the just and the unjust alike, we cannot see whom you can exclude. Know that there is a meaning to that saying which renders it particular, at the same time it is universal. Those who consciously and earnestly love God, place their spirits in instant harmony with His. His will then becomes their will, and they offer in themselves no opposition to the divine plan, which is included in the human plan, even as the human is included in the divine. And in offering no opposition, but

As It is to Be

gladly and lovingly yielding to God's sweet way, the whole universe, material and spiritual, bends to serve and obey the mortal, as if it were the Immortal will, since in harmony they are one."

CHAPTER XVI

A CURIOUS EXPERIENCE — ELEMENTARIES

ONCE in a while during my friendship with these strange companions I have seemed to have interior glimpses of things and happenings not cognizant by my mortal senses. I cannot call them visions, I should rather call them intuitions, a consciousness without senses. A very curious experience happened last evening. I was just beginning to hear the Voices speak, when I became aware of a struggle in mid-air. It seemed to me as if a spirit, about five hundred feet in the air, were struggling with some power or powers, and crying out, "Let me go! Let me alone! I will not go back! Why do you hold me? Let me go, I say!" over and over again.

I felt critical in my mind while I was impressed by what seemed to me to be a quar-

As It is to Be

rel, and, as I am ever on the alert to detect the Voices in one misstatement, I said to myself: "Ha! there is no evil spirit, they say, yet behold, there is a struggle and a quarrel and loud cries in the very air."

In a very brief time the spirit I saw — for it seemed to me I saw this, although I know I did not see it with my own bodily eyes, but with my perceptions — was drawn down to earth and was silenced by what I believed to be other spirits, although I saw nothing but the spirit who seemed to fight air. I then said in a somewhat sarcastic tone: "That was a very pretty sight for the Heavenly sphere!"

"It is strange," said the Voice, "and it is very painful, if what we feel can be called so, because it draws us sympathetically so close to the material."

"What was it? I thought there was with you nothing so material as a quarrel."

"That was not a quarrel!" the Voice exclaimed; "it was a rare occurrence which we very seldom observe. The spirit you saw

A Curious Experience

was that of a man who was dying. His friends believed him, for the moment, dead. His spirit was so far separated from the body as to be conscious of itself and its new freedom. But nature, vitality, the life of the material, was so strong in him that he could not fully dis sever himself from the body; the law of attraction still held him too closely to the material to permit him to escape.

“He realized the pulling back, the strong power behind him pulling on every limb, and only half awakened to his true state, he believed he was attacked and jostled and pulled back by other spirits. So he cried out as you heard, deceived, as you were deceived; but finally obliged to yield, he had to re-enter his body. His friends doubtless thought he fainted, or fell into a state of coma, since he came to life. He will probably live.”

I was thunderstruck at this startling, this wholly unexpected explanation of the singular scene. And now I think it over, this is the second time I have seen anything. The vision of the silver lily was the first and this is the

As It is to Be

second spirit view I have had — both full of significance. . . .

The next day I began to think of what I have read regarding the belief of ancient nations in what is called Elementals. They are mentioned in many books as spirits and as lying, mischievous spirits who can exercise an evil and deceptive power over man.

“Permit me to ask you, my good Voices, what an Elemental is, or rather, is there such a thing?”

“There is.”

“What is it?”

“An undeveloped spirit.”

“May I ask if it is a germ?”

“It is not.”

“If undeveloped it is in embryo, perhaps.”

“No. It is spirit in so far as it is immortal, but it was never human and can never attain to human spirithood. It is not earthly but earthlike — an emanation of primeval matter. It possesses intelligence without soul. It is conscious without knowledge. It is the

A Curious Experience

brute force — the physical vitality — transformed into a sort of spiritual vitality.”

“What is its use in the economy of nature?”

“The preservation of the kind. It is the unreasoning and unmoral intelligence which animates animals, birds, insects, fish, vermin, and all life below the human, — the idea-fact of the lower order of intelligence which cannot rise to human consciousness or thought. Were it not for the existence of elementals, animals would become extinct or dwindle in vitality, instinct, and intelligence to mere idiots of animals, one might say. The spirit of a living being of any order is superior to the being itself. Although an elemental is only the life-principle of a brute creation, yet it partakes enough of its eternal inheritance of glory to know, to think, to utter itself.”

“You certainly seem to contradict yourself. You first say it is conscious without knowledge, and then you say it can know and think.”

“So does your dog know its master, think

As It is to Be

of food and seek it, and utter its meaning by motions. But, certainly, you would never say your dog has knowledge. He is conscious, but not moral. He is capable of reasoning and yet is not a reasonable and therefore responsible being. So it is with the elemental, which represents the animal spirit."

"Animals do, then, have a hereafter?"

"Nothing is ever lost."

"I have often hoped that the sufferings of horses in the service of man, the faithfulness of dogs, the affection of many other animals, should be rewarded. Can I feel that our pets who have been so really dear to us do not absolutely perish at death?"

"They do not. You can renew your friendship for animals, if you please."

"And are they conscious of a newer and better condition? For instance, a splendid, willing, trusty, intelligent horse, which has been beaten, abused, starved to death here — does he awaken to a consciousness of warmth, ease, plenty, all that his brute instincts desire?"

A Curious Experience

“No. He is merged in the general whole.”

“Then how can I observe him when I am a spirit, or know him as ‘Old Bill’ (a fine old fellow long gone to his rest)?”

“Because you will him out of the general into the individual, by your desire, attraction, and attention.”

“A phantom of my own consciousness?”

“No, a reality, since you desire it.”

“I cannot understand this.”

“Well, imagine all the beasts that ever existed. Would you desire that they should re-exist in an individual form?”

“No. That would be a howling wilderness, I should say.”

“Very well. Be satisfied, then, with the law that any sentient being below the human, when leaving the material form, merges into the mass of elemental force, adding its vitality to the spiritual atmosphere from which new material forms are emanated. But if, commanded by the superior human spirit, any particular animal is willed and attracted out of the general mass into an individual spirit-

As It is to Be

ual entity, it will obey and become as real a dog or cat to the human spirit as it was a material dog or cat to the mortal. Were it not so, the supremacy of the soul above the intelligence would not be maintained."

"The Rev. J. G. Wood, author of 'Man and Beast,' would, I am sure, be pleased with this information. His great heart suffers in the thought of animal annihilation."

"Human beings are apt to endow animals with more human attributes of thought, feeling, sensitiveness, delicacy even, than they possess. But such feelings toward animals are ennobling in the extreme. They refine and uplift. Thus there is a reactive influence."

"But all this leaves me where I began in my thought. Where is the compensation for anguish endured by animals and dumb life everywhere? What joy shall come into their consciousness to repay them for the pain of their existence in this life? In what way is justice and mercy to be dealt to *them*, who, sinless, still suffer and suffer, only at last to

A Curious Experience

be killed for the food of man or some other creature for whose prey they were born? Who is to recompense this enormous mass of pain that forever goes on, without stop or limit, in beings who cannot sin, but who live solely to fulfil the requirements of the nature bestowed upon them? If they do not consciously live again, how useless appears their existence,—a vicarious existence, a forced sacrifice of life for the sustaining of other orders in which they have no part and from whom they receive no consideration.”

“We cannot give you any answer. The fact remains that the animal does not attain a separate and conscious individuality. As far as we have ever known, no animal has been conscious of any reward or compensation for his earthly sufferings. Possessed of no lasting memory, he knows not to-day what he suffered yesterday, and does not anticipate any suffering to-morrow. He lives his life and returns to the elements. What that general state may be, I know not. It may be a state of joyous vitality like ours, only adapted to the

As It is to Be

animal nature it represents. But I cannot console you with any definite statement. Faith in God's goodness must here be your logical stay. For if you are so solicitous as to the happiness of the animal creation, remember you could not be if it were not the spark of God in you that makes you so ; and He, in His infinite solicitude for all creation, must have, in some wise way, provided for exact justice and true loving-kindness in this as in other matters, although neither you nor I can understand it."

CHAPTER XVII

RE-INCARNATION — CHILDISH AGE

“ I CONFESS that the last chapter was a distinct disappointment to me. I wished to be told that I can find my pets living spirits in their own form, as immortal as I am ! But I desire now to continue the conversation by asking if there is such a thing as the re-incarnation of the human spirit. That is, if an adult die, can his spirit, under any condition whatever, enter the infant form of another human being and live a second human life in this world ? ”

“ No. He cannot.”

“ Then the keynote of Buddhism and of Brahmanism is a false note ? ”

“ No, not wholly. I, at first, was at a loss to answer your direct question, for it implied so much, but I think I can make you understand. Your soul naturally abhors the idea of

As It is to Be

re-incarnation, and I feared if I admitted the possibility of such a thing you would shrink out of harmony with me. But there is a certain re-incarnation of which the idea of a personal and physical re-incarnation is symbolic or emblematic.

“It is the hint of the truth which has led to a doctrine which is practically false, but spiritually true. The re-incarnation of mind can take place in a certain way, one of which you are at this moment illustrating. I cannot live again upon the earth in a human physical form, but my thought embodies itself and will live, nevertheless, by means of you and your pen.”

“The Buddhistic scheme appears to have been formulated to explain the existence of evil, and especially hereditary evil, and to emphasize the substratum idea of evolution, progress.”

“Yes. But the imagination of the East runs into the material far more easily than the West, much as they boast of their spirituality. Their ‘Nirvana’ is not our Heaven, nor can they conceive of such. The Occidentals

Re-Incarnation — Childish Age

are the active, the Orientals are the passive. Yet here opposites meet."

"You mean that spirit is spirit and goes to spirit, no matter what it believes?"

"The division is peculiar."

"What do you mean by that?"

"I mean that according to the cultivation of the intellect in a right direction, so the advance is more rapid."

"But if the morality be equal?"

"A good man may be a fool."

"True, but we none of us suppose that a good man shall not have the highest reward, let his intellect be what it may."

"Does he in your world?"

"No. But every one feels that by rights he should."

"We spoke in this way because we wished to see if we could mislead you."

"Well, did you see?"

"We see we cannot, for you seem to have a keen perception of righteousness. Let me say now, once for all, that man is born once only, lives one human life, becomes wholly spirit,

As It is to Be

shuffles off all evil, is graded in knowledge and glory according to his character of goodness, and rises to perfection rapidly or slowly, as intellect and goodness are combined in him harmoniously. But you seem to think that all people must instantly enter upon equal knowledge when they reach Heaven, or else they will repine and be or feel misused.

“Ask your maid to-day if she has an ambition to understand Euclid, or to be able to analyze a Greek root, or do a problem in geometry, or read the stars as a seer. Such a proposition would astound or frighten her, and if she thought she should ever be forced to do it she would cross herself and cry to all the saints. Yet think not that she will enter here only to find dissatisfaction. Knowledge is a growth, and the desire for knowledge is an outgrowth of that growth. Ambition for perfection is the flower of the growth of that growth, and not every one attains it in a thousand years.

“Yet all are content in simply growing as God wills, and the joy of every step and every condition, each after its own kind, is a *crescendo*

Re-Incarnation — Childish Age

of multiplied sensations and pleasures. Your sense of justice, absolute justice, is so strong that you cannot bear to think that one human being enters Heaven with any better chance than another.

“But since Heaven is joy, and is taken in by each to his or her fullest capacity, satisfy your mind. Hold up a cup as boundless as space if you will, and ask the Infinite to pour out His whole spirit to fill it, so that you and He are one; but do not think such a feeling could be comprehended by the mass of people, who would shudder at the boldness of the thought and faint at the mere hint of so stupendous a crisis. Each to his own in full satisfaction. So is our life here. Ask no more.”

“I may feel quite safe, then, that I am not ever to be obliged to re-incarnate myself in another human form and perhaps lead the life of an Italian woman, or a Hindoo girl, or even a Frenchman?”

“Neither you nor any human being need fear it, nor anticipate it. The flesh is but the dress of an entity. That entity attains individuality

As It is to Be

by its envelope, in which it lives its human, earthy span. Once cast aside, the spirit's needs are over, as far as your world is concerned. It has been born on the human plane and starts from there. Why should it be born over and over? What advantage would it gain?"

"Why, they teach that in every new incarnation the spirit throws off a little more evil, until finally it becomes saintly and ready to enter — peace."

"The necessity does not obtain."

"You say that the entity becomes individualized by entering its envelope of flesh. Did you not state some time back, that had I never been born I should still have been a fact, an entity, no matter into what shape I was transmuted?"

"Certainly, but you might not have been an earthly, human entity, or have started on the earthly plane. My statement is that you, as an idea-fact uttered by God, are individualized and made distinct and separate by means of the fleshly envelope in which you dwell and

Re-Incarnation — Childish Age .

experience the vicissitudes of existence. If you had not entered the earthly form you might have become one of a different order of beings. Your entity would have remained intact — your dress would have been of a different cut and fashion.”

“ Having, then, become individualized, does the soul ever lapse into the general mass again, so as to need to again become individualized, either here or hereafter ? ”

“ No. As God has made you a woman spirit, so you will remain a woman spirit to all intents and purposes. What is beyond perfection I know not — there may be much — but up to the perfection of the human spirit it preserves its selfhood and identity intact. No spirit can tell you more than this.”

“ What truth is there in the Theosophical doctrine of Karma ? ”

“ None at all. It rests on their doctrine of Re-incarnation, which is utterly wrong.”

“ But let me state the doctrine of Karma as I view it. Maybe there is truth in it ! They say, in brief, that all our acts in this life build

As It is to Be

up for us good or bad conditions in our next life on earth; that a true, noble, unselfish life in this world gains a reward of pleasure, agreeable circumstances, and joyous relations the next time we come back here; therefore our characters will always improve, until we are at last so pure that we have built up a Karma which shall keep us out of any further re-incarnations. While, on the contrary, persistent evil will at last lead us to complete annihilation, or hell."

"There can be no argument about Karma when there is no such thing as re-incarnation. We have told you that the sum and result total of the goodness which you have built up within yourself, in one sole existence in the body, is all that goes with you, or rather *is you*, in the world of spirit which you enter. That good, little or great, is all there is left of your earth experience, and it at once proceeds onward, multiplying itself forever.

The good conditions, the joys which surround it, are the outcome of its own righteousness, and abound more or less, according to

Re-Incarnation — Childish Age

the capacity to enjoy, comprehend and make use attained by the living spirit. There is no looking backward or going over again an existence in a material body, once the spirit is wholly escaped from it, and that process never takes any noticeable length of time."

"Then all this teaching of morality because it will be well for us in our next life here is so much useless and pernicious chatter?"

"It is pernicious because it is not true, and equally so because it holds forth rewards for goodness in a material sense and suggests inevitably material riches, comfort, and pleasures, to the exclusion of higher motives."

"If I were capable of appealing directly to Theosophists all over the world, what argument could I bring to bear to convince them that they are laboring under a delusion?"

"Truth. It will infallibly make its way. The belief in re-incarnation and Karma, introduced into the Western world and eagerly accepted here, is powerful in two ways: it is new to most Europeans and Americans, and those to whom it comes are anxious and asking

As It is to Be

for something which shall satisfy their reason or seem to make a way of escape from the old forlorn doctrines of eternal punishment.

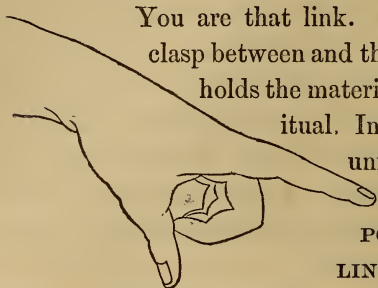
“Many conscientious persons believe that real justice demands the punishment of evil persons, even to the spirit’s death, but they shrink from it nevertheless, and if they could see one loop-hole through which the light of Hope should stream, they would set their eyes and hearts upon it with joy and thanksgiving. This, re-incarnation offers, and Karma is the means by which they think it is possible for even the most evil to repent. It is a sort of probation that the gospels they had been accustomed to do not offer. They say to themselves: ‘Here is a chance that Calvinism does not give me. In the orthodox religion I have but one life, and my judgment comes on that. My poor little seventy years settle my fate. But if I can be re-incarnated many times, each time gaining a little, my judgment will be put off indefinitely, and it will depend upon me, through a long series of experiences, to determine my own final destiny.

Re-Incarnation — Childish Age

“‘That certainly, *that* is the most reasonable and logical. I cannot blame my Maker, then, for He gives me plenty of time ; while, as the Christian religion stands now, He practically gives me no time at all. It is too short. It is not reasonable. I do not believe it. I will accept this better and older theory ! I will be a Theosophist !’

“But neither of these doctrines is true, and you can see for yourself that Theosophy is merely a makeshift, a putting-off of the dread day when some settlement, some definite condition must be entered upon by the soul. Its motive, just like the motive underlying the idea of hell, is fear, and brings forth slavery. The root idea of both these doctrines is ‘save yourself.’ But, as I have told you before, the necessity does not obtain. You are put here in your world principally to accomplish *Divine Diffusion*. God multiplies Himself in you. You are one of the sparks of Eternal joy thrown off from the great centre of life. The abundance of material presupposed a culmination of it in a link between material and spirit.

As It is to Be



You are that link. You are the clasp between and the lock which holds the material to the spiritual. In you both are united, and —

“THE PURPOSE OF THUS LINKING SPIRIT

WITH MATERIAL IN THE UNION SEEN IN THE HUMAN OR INTELLIGENT BEING, IS TO PRODUCE INDIVIDUALIZED CONSCIOUSNESS, WHICH, LIKE OUR FATHER HIMSELF, IS UNLIMITED IN POWER, AND CAPABLE OF PERFECTION, WHICH IS BLISS.

“This is why man is born.

“God’s essence could not be contained selfishly within itself! It must of its nature perpetually diffuse itself and spread abroad ever more abundantly its overflowing love. For this purpose *individual consciousness* was necessary, so that each individual should partake of and be one with the Supreme.

“Having attained individual consciousness by the process of linking the material with the

Re-Incarnation — Childish Age

spiritual in an organized form, you henceforth go on consciously progressing back to the original source. Material being the lowest manifestation of the Divine idea, you start from that lowest plane and go on and on up and towards your source, completing the circle, until you reach the highest plane in which pure essence is !

“ But there is no reason, logic, or sense in the idea that this process must be gone over and over. The thing desired has been accomplished once for all, and God needs not to go over and correct His work. His law has brought your consciousness into being. That fact is sufficient. Given a consciousness, then the cultivation of it, — the broadening, lifting, strengthening of it ! But all it was ever put into a fleshly envelope for was to *personalize* and give it a *separate entity* ! That done, why more ?

“ Imagine a crystal ball cut into thousands of facets. Each facet reflects in little what the whole ball reflects in full. They are of the same material, have their similar lights and

As It is to Be

shadows, are iridescent with the same rainbow hues, and take upon their surfaces the same pictures. They are permeated by the same light, glitter with the same brilliancy and form, and by their very individuality enhance the glory and beauty of the whole. All is of the same nature, but broken up into individual forms upon the surface, so that, look on which side you may, you recognize the exquisite order, purity, beauty, and glory by means of just the individualizing facets.

“Now, imagine a crystal ball perfectly round. Not a line of engraving or cutting, no shade of alteration on one side or the other. It is, indeed, a pure, lucid, beautiful object; but what has become of its sparkle, life, glory of color, reflection of images, rainbow hues, and response from one brilliant point to another? It is, one might say, a ball of dead matter compared with the globe of speaking expression before observed!

“So, my child, in an image infinitely poor and dull we try to bring practically to your mind the cutting up and diffusion of the essence

Re-Incarnation — Childish Age

of our God. Out of Him cometh all we are ; of Him we are all made ; lost from Him we can never be ; one with Him we must always remain ; and it is our joy and His love and grace which make each one of us a facet on the face of His universal globe, reflecting both exterior and interior, and responding to the light within and without Him and between each other. For His nature cannot abide that He should be a dead, flat, undiversified entity, existing selfishly in and for Itself, conscious of Itself alone, and holding Its powers in the limited and egotistic circumference of an unanimated creation.

“ Bless God that you are what you are, — a living part of the Intelligence in which you move. Whatever trials you may suffer, perhaps they may be the polishing brushes of circumstance rubbing you into a finer brilliance.

“ But if all your life you remain a dull and unreflecting facet in the diamond crystal of being, at least, remember that in being a facet at all you have attained forever *your conscious identity*, and God will see to it

As It is to Be

that in the perfection of progress you shall shine like the rest."

.

"Speaking of the vicissitudes of life in a fleshly envelope reminds me of the last years of my admirable grandfather Pond. Everyone knows his saintly character, his bright intellect, his religious ardor, his personal honor and integrity, his manly love of independence and all the virtues. About two years before he died his mind became unbalanced and childish. The quick wit died out, the sparkling intelligence withered, the flower of his manhood decayed, while the poor, patient, sick body lingered on. Tell me, I beg, tell all who watch, with grief and dismay, the beloved aged lose their faculties and shrink into childish senselessness, what becomes of the living spirit during the months when only silly or idiotic stupor rewards the eager and longing watchfulness of their friends? Where does it go? What becomes of it?"

"It comes here."

"What!"

Re-Incarnation — Childish Age

“I said very plainly it comes here. Of course, you have always supposed that until the body lies cold and dead the spirit never deserts it, but it does frequently, although never wholly. You may have noticed that old people who appear very childish up to dying, suddenly regain all their faculties at the last, and make some rational remark that lingers in the astonished memory of friends for many years. Your grandfather is here with us, and, if you choose to question him, will answer you.”

“I am awestruck!”

“Do not be. He is right. I was not wholly with you in those days. I was receiving the holy baptism of a new process, a new birth, which with me lasted long. It was strange, — a dual consciousness, a knowledge that death is simply the decay of the body, and may occur as a mere incident, while the spirit looks calmly on.”

“We felt, when at last your body lay at rest, that you were far away, mounted into the very Heavens.”

As It is to Be

“I was so.”

“I wish, my dear grandfather, or my dear Voice, that I could get the idea of weirdness, of ghastly, ghostly strangeness, out of my head in thinking of death. I have seen people die, have helped them die, if I may say so, giving my prayers and my courage to them through the hand I held; but when the last breath came, the little bubbles of air came from the lungs for the last time, I have felt unearthly, weird, cold, disconsolate, deserted, horror-stricken. Such I believe to be the feeling of almost every one, let faith be never so triumphant or religion never so pure. What can you say to relieve mankind of this instinctive dread, doubt, shrinking from the final scene?”

“We can only reiterate the fact of LIFE. Think of LIFE in its fullest significance — Life, with all its emotions, passions, hopes, ambitions, joys, in full glow and play. Think of yourself on the sunniest morning you ever saw, when your health was perfect, your youth and beauty at their best, your fortunes comfortable, your secret pleasures sweetest, your

Re-Incarnation — Childish Age

very feet too light to walk, so it seemed you must fly, and your voice at the top of its bent singing for very gladness. Is there anything weird or strange about that picture? Think of Light, golden, pure, scintillating in radiance. Everything clear to the senses, no dimness or doubt about it. Think of laughter and friendliness, intercourse with friends and delight in foes, the absence of pain and the absolute lack of all fear. This is your weird, awful death. This it is to die and leave the earth. How ghostly it all is, is n't it? I would I could convince the waiting, dying world of this. Why will ye have ears and hear not? — eyes and see not?"

"Ah, but the eyes of the body are so blind, the ears so slow of comprehension! Before you, great spirit, passed from earth, had you not the natural and proper fear of death which secures self-preservation?"

"Yes, my child, but I had also a hope, a sweet and constant belief in the restoration of my faculties to their highest powers. In my inner being, which at the last was dull and

As It is to Be

stupid in its outer expression, I already knew that death is LIFE, — the only life, the way to life. Proclaim it and prepare for this life of which ye shall all partake.”

“I believe it *is* my grandfather who has dictated to me these last paragraphs. May I ask, then, how it is that a weak, or feeble, or aged body loses its spirit to a certain degree?”

“It is a natural law that spirit seeks spirit — like seeks like. The more enfeebled the body, the more worn and aged the material, the less power it has to attract and hold the spirit, which is ever struggling to be free. From the time of birth the body and the spirit are in a state of struggle — one to leave, the other to keep. For this reason food is constantly necessary to rebuild the system, which, once too much weakened, is immediately conquered by the spirit and thrust off. The material life of man is a long birth, as it were, an embryo state in which the spirit develops, ever longing to be born, and when the body becomes much enfeebled it frequently happens that all but an animating principle

Re-Incarnation — Childish Age

detaches itself and enters a new state, bordering on spiritual consciousness, but not fully in harmony with spirit and liable to be recalled if by any chance the powers of the natural man are re-enhanced by any means, or the great throes of material being momentarily demand the re-entrance of the soul.

“I referred to the fact of evident consciousness and rationality at the last being observed in persons long sunken in childishness. The last painful effort of nature to re-assert itself is then so strong, so violent, as to compel the fleeting spirit to re-assume the fading garment of mortality for a brief period.”

“But is not the state of the spirit painful and restless, uncertain and out of harmony with itself and its environment when half detached and half not?”

“There is no pain in spirit. I cannot sufficiently describe such a state as it enters. I can only say that no evil of any kind, either of feeling, or perception, or sensation, can disturb the spirit. It is the body which is constantly disturbed and out of harmony with its

As It is to Be

environment. Outside of the body there is nothing to dread. The worst there is you see right before you in the deficiencies of the senses, the physical pain, the loss of memory, the stupor which fills you with grief and anxiety. In so far as the spirit escapes from all this, it is at rest."

"And if one has been extremely active and keeps his faculties to the end, or if one is suddenly struck out of physical life in the vigor of his strength, what happens then? Is it a shock to the soul as well as to the body?"

"The peace of God, which passeth understanding, ever abideth with the spirit of man."

"I cannot sufficiently thank you for this encouraging information. Many hearts will be relieved by it."

"That is precisely what we desire and what it is your mission to fulfil. You are to enjoy and spread joy. That is your motto; and let me tell you, little child, there is more good fortune to you in this than you wot of. Good-night."

CHAPTER XVIII

MUSIC, ART, AND MEMORY

“**P**ERMIT me to ask you something about the music in heaven. One of the greatest delights of earth is its concord of sweet sounds. Yet the beautiful music now elaborated by means of every kind of instrument has been a long and patient growth from the beginning of the history of man. In the National Museum at Washington is a magnificent collection of almost all known instruments, and in many libraries are preserved the MSS. of music written by the most celebrated composers. Are all these to be of no value in the after life? And how about the voices of dead singers, the songs of birds? Do these too become ‘lost chords’? How can a song that is sung, an opera that has been finished be reproduced as it was heard on earth? If the masters live shall

As It is to Be

their works live with them? I doubt not that we shall have music, but will it be played by means of mechanical instruments? Some spiritualists believe that if you long for a piano, but are deprived of it in this life, in Heaven the piano will be provided."

"There is nothing material in spirit. So we may smilingly state that a drum, a brass instrument, a piano, a music-box, have no place here."

"Of course no human can conceive of music without some means by which to make it."

"We have means, only not your means."

"What are your means?"

"Ears to hear, or rather the perception of music in ourselves. On the sensitive atmosphere of spirit all sound is thrown, as on its atmosphere also all scenes are photographed. All music which has ever been sounded eternally sounds, and we have but to choose what we will hear, to hear it, excluding what we do not desire to hear."

"This is still done by the simple laws of attraction and attention, I suppose?"

Music, Art, Memory

“You are beginning to be an apt pupil.”

“But this is not wholly satisfying. It is a pleasure to hear excellent music, but to some people who have genius the pleasure of composing and playing music is infinitely greater. Yet how many, sick from the music in their souls, die with it unuttered from lack of opportunity, teaching, the lack of the instrument itself. Shall they go forever ungratified?”

“There is no such thing here. ‘Ungratified’! Why, such a word does not belong to our language. We do not understand it.”

“But if there are no instruments to play upon, how shall these unhappy ones play?”

“Upon their hearts. Out of it are the issues of the soul. A spirit’s genius finds its true expression within itself, and out of his own being come the harmonies, which require no instrument for translation. Music is thought expressed by means of a material in the world. Music in Heaven is thought. The moment the musical thought is uttered it expresses itself, instantly, in the tone, length

As It is to Be

of tone, harmony, chord, scale, and so forth, where it belongs. On earth a man must prove he is musical by taking a violin in his hands and using the bow across its strings. When people hear it they are convinced that he is musical and can play the violin, because they can see and hear him do it.

“Now, when that same man comes here and continues his musical thought in reference to the violin, he utters himself in the tones of the violin by means of what we may call violin-thoughts, and at once it is patent to all that he is capable of violin-music.

“As we have told you before, material is only the expression of the spiritual, and while the violin may be shattered, the music fled, to all mortal ears, the man’s body cold in his coffin, and the memory of his playing wiped from the minds of his generation, still all that he ever thought in musical exercise of his powers remains intact, to be used, improved upon, and enjoyed, with all the ardor of an added comprehension.

“It is upon this same principle that painting,

Music, Art, Memory

sculpture, poetry, architecture, and the accomplishment of talent or genius in any direction becomes easy where we dwell. There is no necessity for the instrument, opportunity, teaching, when what is in a man or woman expresses itself without the aid of brushes and canvas, chisel and hammer, pen and paper, stone and mortar, and always only at its highest and best."

"But I cannot quite understand how a sculptor, for instance, can express a statue out of himself so that any one else can see it. Do you mean to say that if Hiram Powers were talking with me in the spirit world, that if he had a fancy for a new statue of Eve, he would begin to look like his conception of that statue, so that for the time being I should see him practically turned into the statue itself?"

"No. The utterance of thought in spirit takes form. He does not himself change and turn into his thought. He utters himself in form, instead of in words which express form. He might sit with you there all day at your

As It is to Be

desk and describe to you in words what his conception was ; but the more he told you of the lines and curves, the attitude and drapery, the expression and character, the more confused you would get, and under no circumstances could you see that statue as he saw it in his mind's eye. But here he would think his statue into form without any description at all, and you would perceive it just as he thought it."

"And, having done so, would the statue remain permanently, so that I or many might see it over and over, or would it, having accomplished its mission of being seen by me at the moment, go back into Mr. Powers' brain, or dissolve, or disappear ? "

"If mortal thought is eternal, certainly spiritual thought is so. Heaven is made up of thought utterance in every possible form, and each of these is enjoyed forever."

"But to return to music. Much musical thought must be unmusical beyond expression. It is here. A perfect clamor of hideous sounds arises from this city every day, only

Music, Art, Memory

mercifully hidden from the ear of the public by enclosing walls. What becomes of the practisings and experiments of beginners and would-be artists in Heaven? If all their cornet and fife and drum utterances resound through the eternal vault, I should prefer some other abode."

"You make us laugh."

"I am glad of that — but what is your answer?"

"Righteousness extends through the domain of spirit from end to end. You have heard a scientific man say that a careless conclusion is actually immoral. Artists feel that a discord of color is artistically immoral. It touches them to a sense of indignation in a master, and pity or contempt in a pupil. Intellect is moral or immoral, although it is not generally considered so. The abstract operations of a mathematical problem contain within themselves the elements of righteousness or unrighteousness.

"Now, when the soul arrives here, all that is immoral and unrighteous, even in the intel-

As It is to Be

lectual, scientific, artistic sense, is done away with. Whatever is done, is done rightly and in the best way. It may be a very simple thing in itself, but whatever the act, so far as it goes, it goes righteously and in the proper direction.

“Since, then, the law of harmony operates continually and no one can escape from it, any more than a mortal can escape from the law of gravitation, — whatever is uttered, is uttered harmoniously, and it blends itself with the general harmony without noticeable or unpleasant sharpness, the will of the observer being the focusing point, which draws it into distinct and separate being for *him*. So if in a Heavenly audience, which had assembled to hear a Heavenly oratorio, one should desire to hear only the flute obligato, he would hear only the flute obligato, while the rest would hear it all.”

“If all music uttered in Heaven is perfect as far as it goes, I can conceive of no higher pleasure than attending an oratorio. But this expressing one’s self — this uttering of one’s self

Music, Art, Memory

in form—leads me to another phase of life there, which in my imagination troubles me much.

“You remember St. Paul said that ‘now we see as through a glass, darkly, but then face to face.’ This prophecy has always been a bugbear to me, and I imagine that other people shrink from its idea. Nobody wants to be seen face to face. There are secrets, errors, temptations, shames even, in every life, no matter how pure, which all would instinctively hide or blot out forever. The struggles of the soul against the enticements of the flesh are, in some of the most magnificent characters, of such a nature, that to have them exposed to public view and criticism would be a humiliation, a source of hurt pride and bitterness which would undo all the good the experience had done.

“Must we, then, believe that that sacred, hidden portion of ourselves and our histories, which we guard with our very lives here, must immediately stand the fire of ‘ten thousand witnesses,’ and the sins we may

As It is to Be

have hoped were blotted out by the grace of God appear and confront us with their horrible realities on the eternal canvas of spirit, painted irrevocably for all the Heaven to read?"

"No. God is not so mean as that. Not that you meant to cast a slur on His justice and honor, but that you felt that perhaps that is the only remedial punishment which would be absolutely just. But look at it. Can you conceive of a more unjust proceeding than to have, as you say, 'ten thousand witnesses' to look at all the actions of the past and judge them and you by them? To be sure, in that case you could read their lives also, but that would be a poor consolation. No, child. I will show you how impossible such a state of affairs here would be.

"In the first place, it is against the law of harmony. Sin, struggle, temptation, error, are no part of spirit life. Neither are the reflections of sins, struggles, temptations, errors, thrown on the eternal canvas. The camera is not sensitive to them. Photograph-

Music, Art, Memory

ically, they 'won't take.' They belong to material things, and never can leave their own element. You will remember that it was written that 'Satan shall be chained for a thousand years.' The real meaning of that saying I have just interpreted to you. The evil elements within human nature were personified under the name of Satan; and feeling intuitively that the time would inevitably come when these should be wholly cast out and forever imprisoned in the material, their proper abode, the prophet pictured the casting of Satan into the bottomless pit by the angel of Heavenly Goodness. For all out of harmony must stay out of harmony. There is no entrance into the kingdom of God excepting through the door. The door is spirit, and all spirit is pure.

"Again, even in your mortal form, God has given you the protection of silence. Unless you choose to tell the secret in your mind, none can know it. You are hedged in by the beautiful economy of an unreadable intellect, suited admirably to a brain covered by a bony

As It is to Be

and fleshly envelope. They may saw it open, the secret escapes. They may draw the brain out and examine it microscopically, yet it holds its tongue. Every protection is granted you in mortal life to preserve your individuality intact. You do not know what John thinks or does, when he conceals it. Houses, rooms, all the limitations of civilization, are accessories and helps to keep his thinkings and doings unknown when he wishes to keep them so ; and the fact is, you do not know John very well, although you have lived in the house with him for ten years.

“Imagine, then, the still more beautiful protections which surround the soul when it has entered into a state where spiritual law prevails and everybody obeys it. It is not like natural law, which everybody disobeys. On earth it seems as if men spent their time pulling and tugging against the very laws that are their true life. It is right in its way — it means education, domination, progress. But here we obey, not only because we are willing to, but because we must, and wish to, just on the

Music, Art, Memory

same principle that you breathe. You must breathe, you cannot help it, and you wish to breathe. If you could not breathe you would be in agony until you could. That is our life in all its ramifications. We must be good, and we wish to be good. If we could not be good we should be in agony until we could be good. We wish the sweetest, highest, noblest pleasures for all others—all others, understand—and we must do our share to cause such pleasure. If we could not wish and do so we should be in agony until we could. So on.

“Now, is this compatible with the view of the sins of human life being put before us? Remember, we all breathe in God and take pattern from Him. He sets the fashions here—bless His holy name!—and even He is voluntarily subject to His own laws.

“Then, finally, nothing can occur in spirit which does not work out an advantage. On earth thousands of projects are worked and the end is no visible advantage. Here visible advantage is the immediate result of all

As It is to Be

things done. The universe of spirit is sweeping on towards perfection. Each step leads on. There are no retrogrades. Why, then, should that mortal episode, which is past and done with, be dragged into general inspection? What lesson could it teach here? It taught its lesson of experience there, and led the perpetrator to do better, or eschew it, perhaps, but here we cannot eschew what enters not into the life, and we cannot do better where each one, according to his or her capacity, is doing the best possible.

“Put aside, then, the thought that that lack of charity, that ignoble suspicion, that unkind word, that or this or the other error, fault, sin, in your life-history shall be made in the after-life a subject for comment. **YOU COME HERE AS A WHOLE, NOT IN PARTS.** There lies the error of human judgment. So many have been taught that this or that error or sin is judged separately, or rather, that an account is kept of the sins and the good deeds, and on striking a balance, the soul is punished or rewarded. This is not true. Life, both on

Music, Art, Memory

earth and in spirit, is a progress. Experience is the teacher, God the helper. Now, from sin to sin you pass, and from virtue to virtue you pass. It is a constant mixing and mingling of good acts, bad acts ; good motives, bad motives, mixed motives ; hereditary and almost compulsory errors, hereditary and almost compulsory virtues ; tendencies arrested and developed ; imagination warped or broadened ; and all this going on in the mass of surrounding influences, visible and invisible, which act upon, pull, push, twist, lower, lift, by beating on nerves and muscles, digestion, brain, intensifying emotion, lowering the vitality of both body and intellect, vitiating the will, and pouring on the receptive spirit the million daily drops of vicissitude which go to make the deep current of human existence.

“ Now, if the being, under these overwhelming circumstances, keeps a general tendency upward, aspires instead of grovels, has faith instead of yielding to scepticism, and battling along does gradually build up a character of good, here he comes with that good, pure and

As It is to Be

simple, leaving all that went to produce it still at work, still active for others in the material world.

“And if he has struggled in vain, and his tendency to evil and the material has been too strong to build up a substantial character of good, still God helps, — for he is a spark of God, and must forever preserve his identity intact ; and although he may come here a mere infant in goodness, all the evil in his life that built up even so much (and under certain circumstances to build up *so much* is a wonder to the angels) is also left behind him to operate with the general mass on others ; and weak, fainting, feeble, into the land of Life he comes, to be cherished in his little goodness with as much tenderness and overflowing love as if he rode upon the wind, in a current of Attraction, to the Throne.

“Goodness is goodness here, much or little. A diamond is a diamond on earth, and you cherish it according to its size. Here each diamond is a gem struck off from the Crown of Joy, and its value lies not in its size, but in

Music, Art, Memory

its identity. The fact that it is a diamond at all is enough."

"But we ourselves can remember the past, can we not, and communicate it to others if we please? There are very many secret feelings that I have had in my life, which I should not want to forget, and still would not wish others to know; also equally exquisite emotions which I should like to impart."

"If you keep your identity it is supposable that you keep your memory. I have told you before that you remember everything. It is here that punishment comes in, if you can call that 'punishment' which is, after all, a beneficence. For whatever is remedial in its tendency, no matter how bitter in actual experience, is a benefit to the soul beyond expression. The knowledge of his past life, with the results to his soul in the new life, is to the criminal one of the remedial punishments which urge, uplift, brace him to effort, advancement, high aims.

"Many a soul, feeble in goodness, ignorant of the blessings attendant on its increase,

As It is to Be

might lie dormant, passive, unkindled so far as itself were concerned, were it not for memory, which was the birth-gift of earth. But now, abhorring evil, shuddering at vice in himself, memory sends him on towards perfection with an almighty levership. Ah! it is so difficult to put into language the true condition of the spirit at any phase of its existence, — yet we do our best.”

CHAPTER XIX

FEAR

“**V**OICE of the Silence ! you say that in the spirit world there is no such thing as fear. I cannot sufficiently congratulate you on that. Fear in its various forms seems to be one of the greatest torments of earth. Can you tell me what is its nature and why it exists, and if there is any way for an intelligent being to be rid of it ? Excessive timidity seems to be one of the darkest clouds over happiness.”

“Fear is in its nature harmless.”

“What ?”

“I repeat, fear is in its nature harmless. It is the abuse of fear that makes it harmful. Fear, like any other ‘evil’ element of the earth, is ‘earthy,’ and only adapted to earthly conditions. It is not experienced in spiritual conditions, because there is no necessity for

As It is to Be

preserving and conserving life, energy, power, existence. Pain we know not, nor decay, nor deterioration of any faculty or pleasure. Nothing wanes here. Everything waxes. But with you self-preservation is the first instinct, and underlies the possibility of a material evolution. Were it not for this instinct of self-preservation no race of organic beings could ever have come into rational existence. Now, fear is the harmless, nay, the beneficent force which helps this instinct of self-preservation and keeps it alive and active. The fear of an animal that preys upon it keeps a rabbit cautious, and gives it power to secrete itself or scamper off at the approach of an enemy.

“So throughout all Nature. Fear is the check and the incentive — the one to prevent from rushing into danger, the other to plan and build and act against danger — which preserves the species and the genus, the whole race from utter annihilation. Coming to man, fear is a beneficent power until abused. God never created in Nature or spirit an evil which

Fear

was an evil until abused. Every force is beneficent if you use it properly, and if you look at it closely you find it not only beneficent, but preservative and tending towards the best and highest good of everything to which it is applied.

“To illustrate: Man’s fear of fire prevents immense conflagrations. Why? Because his fears cause him to take precautionary measures. Man’s fear of public opinion prevents crime and folly to an almost unlimited extent, when the whole mass of the population is considered, for he dreads exposure, disgrace, and punishment. Indeed, take fear quite out of the world, and anarchy, bloodshed, riot, and gradual extinction would come to the race. For instance, to bring the illustration quite home to you, what do you think would happen to-night if fear were instantly eliminated from the heart of every person in your city? Every man would instantly feel a new and unwonted freedom. The angry man would beat his wife; the man bent on revenge would murder; men on duty under superior officers

As It is to Be

would 'take a night off;' burglars would infest houses; men's passions let loose would rape and seduce; women would fly to meet illicit lovers; servants would cease to attend to their duties; people would walk off docks, bridges, high places, or cross in front of horses, engines, or place themselves in the most dangerous situations physically, morally, and mentally. There is no end to the revolution which would occur at once if fear were taken out of the world. Sharp-cutting truths would be uttered and life-long enemies made; secrets would be told and lives blighted; in fact, we cannot fully picture what this city would be in twenty-four hours.

"Thus you see, with a little thought, that whatever is, is, so far as it is used properly, right. But there is an abuse of fear which should be overcome and driven out of every heart. It is needless fear, — fear for tomorrow, anxiety, doubt, those forms of fear that almost invariably deal with the future. Men do not fear the past; that is over. They fear the results of the past as happening

Fear

in the future, — results of mis-steps, errors, crimes, which they have not yet ‘paid for,’ as they call it.

“Again, fear is abused, instead of used, when unfaith creeps in, or faith in coming evil hereafter, or doubt of God’s eternal mercy and love, or belief in torments and everlasting damnation. Religious fear in any form whatever is the abuse of fear, for there is no fear in true religion, nothing to fear hereafter, and fear has no place beside so holy a word. Remember the saying, ‘Have no anxious thought for the morrow;’ yet who is there who does not have anxious thought for the morrow? Few who reach mature life. Every woman fears sickness, accident, trouble to her near and dear ones, if not to herself. Parting and separation are full of human fears. Business is crowded with fears; in fact, almost every situation in life has its fearsome side. Every situation should, but only so far as rational precaution goes. ‘Do right and fear not.’ That is a notable motto. Use your privilege of fear just so far as reasonable judgment

As It is to Be

tells you it is available to protect the interests of yourself and your friends, but, having used it to that extent, carry it no farther. The moment you do you abuse the gift and deliberately turn it into an evil.

“Thus, in a business complication, use your best knowledge of affairs, act as honorably as if you were dealing with God, and let it turn as it will. Whichever way it turns, it will be the best way. For if you put into it only the elements of good, it cannot go against your best interests. You may lose a fortune in spite of your best endeavor, but you will be certain to find that sometime, somewhere, either on earth or in heaven, you have won, gained, advanced, in ratio to what true goodness you put into the whole matter. Remember that goodness, righteousness, enters into business talent as well as into business morality, into calculations of finance as well as into every other phase of earthly experience, and in so far as you preserve the integrity of your honor, you gain inevitably, even though you are reduced to poverty.

Fear

“Again, you may be watching by the sick bed of a loved one; do everything in your power to arrest the disease and fear not. Whichever the result, if you are truly in harmony with God’s will, and offer no resistance of fear, doubt, distrust, you may be sure Almighty goodness will see to it that the best and only the best for all concerned shall come out of the experience.

“But this is only the most general promise of courage. We may easily indicate how lack of fear actually helps where anxiety, doubt, and worriment might wholly defeat your own purpose. As I say, having done all that true fear demands, in the way of precautionary measures, if you then utterly drop fear, you become calm, quiet, cool, brave, strong, powerful, influential, and a force. Your own calm mind, rationally active, throws out healthy currents filled with vital forces from your well-conserved will. These strong, invisible forces of your controlled and positive thought, act upon the thoughts of others and control them. The vigorous, sweeping cur-

As It is to Be

rent of your manly or womanly freedom from the nervous excitement, even prostration, or overstrung, tense mental and physical condition, — a current which moves with a grand, silent flow amidst the petty, shifting rills of thought about it, — will gather them in and move them on in the direction you wish to go, and instead of being one among a thousand as anxious and wrought up as yourself, you will be the directing force, which shall either swing them away as obstacles of no moment, or carry them on to a success.

“So also with sickness. Trusting in God, doing your utmost, fearless because sure that God permits no evil to His children, your spirit will breathe over the patient its own vitality and vigor. Your very atmosphere will breed life in the diseased body, by contact, of strength, of purity, faith, power, and out of the very calmness and surety of your soul your loved one may be saved. It is this that Jesus meant when He cautioned His disciples not to fear too much. Fear beyond its proper use is weakening, deaden-

Fear

ing, discouraging, and evil. The life of the spirit is crushed in a man who fears. For the spirit cannot exist in an atmosphere antagonistic to its own quality. But oh! how beautiful is the first flight of a fearless spirit upwards! It is out of its element when plunged in fear, as much as a bird would be when plunged in water. It must struggle with all its might to live in a body drawn and quartered by fear. For fear is a torment beyond words, and is not in any sense spiritual.

“Cast out, then, this evil the moment it begins to be an evil. Some one once said to you in a wise way, ‘Trust as if it all depended upon God. Work as if it all depended upon yourself.’ Live day by day, moment by moment, as if nestled against God’s very heart, for there is no moment that you do not lie upon that Universal Breast which beats forever with the throbs of infinite love. If you knew God had His arm right around you and was speaking the word of Victory for you at every moment, you would have no fear.

“Rest assured this is the absolute fact. The

As It is to Be

moment you will lean upon that Arm, the moment you will listen to and obey that Voice, that moment Victory, in some form, awaits your every effort, and fear is needless. It is because the spirit is fully conscious of this at all times that no fear prevails. It rests with you yourself, with each one of the men and women and little children who are alive to-day, whether they shall be successful or not, advance or not, grovel or not, aspire and rise or not. In the one case they can love God so perfectly as to cast out all fear ; in the other, they can love earth and themselves and what fleeting pleasures they can weakly gain, so much that fear shall dodge and pursue them to the very grave."

"Then rational courage is a power ?"

"Yes, thought of any kind is a power. You, perhaps, do not realize that when you sit by 'your own self,' as you like to say it, and think, that whatever you think is making its impression on hundreds of other minds ?"

"No, I never thought of such a thing."

"It is high time you did. You certainly

Fear

would be more careful what you thought if you knew somebody heard it and would shout it from the housetops in ten minutes. Now would n't you ? ”

“ I certainly should, on the same principle that we never speak as freely before twenty as we do before our intimate friend.”

“ The actual words of your thought are not heard, of course. But each thought has an invisible influence. It is a power. It impresses itself upon the spiritual atmosphere in which all Nature is immersed, and it carries with it a peculiar force to act upon all other minds, as their thought acts upon yours.

“ So, if your habitual thoughts are pure, ennobling, trustful, intellectual, free from low or mean intentions, selfish aims, false hopes, false theories, frivolous, inane, and silly devices and amusements ; if courage and integrity, honor, charity, chastity, tenderness, sympathy, righteousness occupy your mind, you send out from your room, your bed, your carriage, your seat, your passage along the street, indeed, from every place where you stand, sit, or lie, a

As It is to Be

strong, steady, positive force for good, clearing the moral atmosphere about you, lighting up the darkness of melancholy, discord, grief, weariness, hopelessness, fear, wrath, revenge, cruelty, meanness, and guilt, which unfortunately are mixed and mingled in the spiritual atmosphere of all cities. Remember this: Every thought is a power. Make it a power for good."

CHAPTER XX

ASTROLOGY

“**T**HERE is no phase of occult research which does not interest me. Teach me, then, if you can, my kind Voices, whether there is any truth in the so-called science of Astrology. It may be superstition in me, but I have known of and believed in several predictions made by this method which seemed remarkable, both for accuracy and for knowledge. Yet it does not seem reasonable that Jupiter should make a man a ruler! Do the stars and planets have any influence on the lives and careers of men?”

“No, not directly.

“That implies that indirectly they do have such influence.”

“Man is influenced by all things, visible and invisible. We cannot say the stars and planets do not influence his life, because they do — most magnificently. Where would your

As It is to Be

Astronomy be, for instance, with no remote suns and beautiful planets to observe and lift the soul Heavenward? And in many other ways they influence him. But if you ask us whether his individual existence, as regards his fortunes, marriage, business career, or other incidents of his earth-life are brought about by the influences of the planets acting directly upon him, we answer no, for man is a creature possessing free will, and is under no influence of any such character.

“Astrology is practically a chapter of coincidences, built up by general prognostications of effect from cause, and helped by the eloquence and cunning of the astrologer playing upon the credulity and superstition of the believer. Coincidence has a remarkable effect on the human mind, although Nature herself is one continued mating and ‘putting together of two and two.’ The fact is, that so few cases appear in exact sequence of an astrological prophecy and so many fail or are so absolutely ignored, that in the long history, to which its votaries turn in triumph, the things it did succeed in

Astrology

predicting, set over against the things it did not succeed in predicting, are as the first turned leaves of the autumn against the background of solid green."

"One should put no dependence, then, upon the so-called laws of Astrology, and pay no attention to the planets in the ascendent at birth?"

"As an amusement it may do no harm, but to build upon it would be misleading. For instance, supposing an astrologer should tell a woman that at forty-three her husband would die, and that at forty-five she would have an offer of marriage from a man who would prove to be a villain, but that she was fated to marry him. And further, supposing her husband should happen to die when she was forty-three and at forty-five some gentleman should offer her his hand. What do you suppose would be the effect on her mind of these two simple coincidences? She would certainly suspect the man of being a villain, no matter how excellent his character, and her whole judgment of the situation would

As It is to Be

be warped and biased by something that in reality had no meaning, influence, or truth, save as a very general guess, which happened, in very natural sequence, to prove correct. For why, if her husband should die at any time, should she not, after a proper time is passed, receive addresses from gentlemen?

“So these charlatans thrive on the very simplest and easiest deceptions. Few stop to think that whatever is predicted must hit the case at some time or in some way, and in the many things that are always told, one at least will appear to ‘come true.’ Then they are convinced. Do not have to do with this folly in any earnest way. It is beneath the dignity of an immortal intellect.”

“Nevertheless, all literatures of all times and many peoples abound with allusions to the influence of the stars on human destiny. How is it that falsehood is so persistent? Why does not enlightenment wholly explode such falsities?”

“Give it time. The theory of re-incarnation is one of the prime beliefs of millions, yet

Astrology

there is not the least truth in it. Man does not advance in truth in proportion to his mental capacity any faster than Nature advances in evolution of higher forms. If it takes him four thousand years to wholly taboo a false religious doctrine, how long do you think it will take him to know the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth? The earth will be without form and void before he knows that. Yet the stupendous difference between a cultivated intellect and an oyster, for instance, is apparently as infinite as is that between perfection and mortality."

"But it seems strange that in so many recorded instances, deaths, insanity, accidents, catastrophes and favorable events to men and nations have occurred as predicted. I think I must insist on asking once more, is there *any* truth in Astrology?"

"No."

"Can a man predict future events by means of a horoscope or diagram of the stars as applied to one's birth?"

"No."

As It is to Be

“It has been done correctly.”

“Not by those means.”

“By what means, then?”

“Either by human reason and calculation, by reading physiognomy, form, and character, or by clairvoyance, or by coincidence, or by mind-reading, or by transference of magnetism and mental impression, or by clairsaudience. But not by calculation of the planets. Man has free will, and is not subjected to natural or material forces, save in a general way.

“The moon affects the tides, and his ship may sail at three o'clock instead of seven o'clock. Had he waited until seven the captain would have just escaped a gale. As it was he ran into it, his vessel foundered, and he was drowned. But to say that he was influenced by the moon directly, instead of by his human reason, or to say that he could not have sailed at any other hour if he chose to do so, because he was born under such and such an influence of the moon, is folly.”

“You say that man is not subject to natural and material forces, save in a general way.

Astrology

Will you not please to explain what you mean by 'a general way'?"

"I mean that fire will burn him; if he falls from a high place he will be injured; if he stays under water too long he will be drowned; if lightning strikes him he will probably be killed; if a weight falls upon him he will be crushed; if he defies the winter he will probably have a cold; if he defies the intense heat of summer he will probably be sunstruck. He is always operated upon, and thus influenced, by the forces of Nature, visible and invisible, but these do not influence his spirit in any phenomenal way.

"The laws of cause and effect operate in him steadily, but that being born under Jupiter will make him rich, or under Venus will make him poetic, or under Mars will make him a soldier, is not true. Of the masses and millions who never so much as knew what Astrology meant, thousands have been born 'under Mars' without a single soldierly quality or military connection, and thousands more, born under the very finest

As It is to Be

aspect of Venus, never composed a line of poetry, never painted or had anything to do with the fine arts, and only plodded on 'unknown, unhonored, and unsung,' in the daily round of drudgery, or savagery, or stupidity, which is the lot of so many poor mortals on your earth."

"Yet great men of all ages have believed in and consulted Astrology."

"True. It all arises from the longing, the craving, to know the future, and is only a more exalted form of divination by means of tea-grounds, apple-seeds, chickens' 'lucky-bones,' and other simple tricks. It is on the same principle that people cry out, 'Do not open an umbrella over your head in the house, it is unlucky' (what about the time when they had no umbrellas?); and 'Do not sew anything which is on your body, it is unlucky;' and 'Never pare your nails on a Friday, it is unlucky;' and 'If you put on your stocking wrong side out don't change it, it is unlucky.'"

"All these things are mere notions, of no moment or consequence, and do not affect

Astrology

one's fate by a hair. I cannot illustrate the fallibility of Astrology in any better way than by calling your attention to the fact that, no matter what is predicted, it must happen somewhere, at some time, for predictions are invariably based upon experiences of the past ; and if any prediction were sifted to the bottom it would be found to have been caused by means of one or the other powers I have mentioned, or else to have been so applied by those who had knowledge of some subsequent occurrence as to appear to have fitted the case.

“ Like all superstitions, Astrology appeals to just those elements in human nature which are most easily misled and confused, exaggerated or intensified ; while few ask a question of an astrologer without secretly wishing he may predict the truth. This very wishing and believing leads a weak person to do the very thing that would naturally bring the circumstance about, and the result is that a coincidence may occur which will convince against all argument. We state positively, however,

As It is to Be

that there is no more truth in the so-called science of Astrology than there would be in such as this: 'If an owl shall hoot seven times of a night on one side of a house, a member of the family will die within seven days, seven weeks, or seven months,' — a sentence that I have this moment originated."

"I have been somewhat superstitious in that way myself. On the night before I sailed for Bermuda, an astrologer, who could n't have known anything of me, told me that I was to sail for a tropical island inside of three days, and that my husband would follow me later, since he had decided that very day to go. On arriving at a friend's house I found a telegram saying that my husband would follow me in a fortnight. Up to that day he could not have decided, for some business reasons. I went, and he went, precisely as the man predicted. How did he do it?"

"He was clairvoyant, or else read your mind. Why, child, your whole atmosphere, thought, intent, purpose, were permeated with the thought of going and of your husband's

Astrology

going. If he was the least sensitive he could not fail to get the impression. So it is in general. People go to the astrologers, either out of idle curiosity or else intent upon some certain topic. A shrewd reader of character, impressionable and even partially clairvoyant, will be exceedingly stupid if, after a little experience, he cannot satisfy his client with a story which shall call out unreasoning admiration. But let us drop the subject, which is unpleasant and useless. We prefer to get out of the plane of the ignoble and false as rapidly as possible, for to dwell on it is to us an actual trial."

CHAPTER XXI

PROVIDENCE

“IT has always been a happy thing for me to believe that God loves each of us as if each were the only child He has. Aware that the general pronounciation of the above word does not convey its full value, Prov-i-dence — viz., to provide — I am anxious to ask *The Voices* if there is such a thing as a real, personal Providence manifested towards individuals by the Deity.”

“Yes, there is.”

“How can that occur without partiality?”

“How does the sun shine fruitfully on one man’s crop and blastingly on another’s?”

“Why, it depends upon the nature of the soil, the crop, the abundance of water and the care with which the field is cultivated, whether the sun shall blast or render fruitful. If the soil be well selected in reference to the seed

Providence

put in, and all other conditions are carefully looked out for, the crop will be a success."

"Well, so with God's providences to individuals. If they, with all wisdom and human foresight, together with the proper conditions, do all in their power to bring about success, they succeed."

"Not always! Many and many a man, with all possible care and foresight, has failed to succeed because of the lack of what seems to be just this personal providence of which I speak. The sun won't shine on his field, do what he will. Clouds constantly obscure the sky, and he fails for want of sun. The records of biography show that man after man of genius has gone down to a pauper's grave in obscurity and misery! Where was the *Providence* in their case?"

"That they were men of genius! Else you would never have heard of them. Do you think their compensations rested in fine clothes, rich food, and the ease of your world? These might have stifled the very poem in its birth. God's providence to such lies in themselves, —

As It is to Be

the seeing eye, the hearing ear, the responsive heart, the intellectual greatness, the pure spirit, the noble achievement. What was it to them when they came here, endowed with the glory of their inner powers, that for a few brief earthly years they suffered to bring those powers into condition, force them into action, and accomplish the works that set the world cheering with wonder and admiration? So, in differing degrees, of all men."

"What I meant, especially, was something a little different to this. I meant, for instance, in answer to prayer, does God assist a man (or woman, if you please) in the accomplishment of any material business, desire, or ambition, or grant things prayed for, by an interposition in the individual's favor?"

"No, God never interposes between His own laws. He will not reverse any law in favor of anybody. Prayer will not effect any change whatever in the natural sequence of affairs."

"Then what is the use of prayer?"

"There are many uses, but I take it you

Providence

mean peculiarly in reference to a *providence*. I said *prayer* effects no change in the affairs of men, as simply a *request* that such a change shall occur, unaccompanied by any effort on the part of the prayer-maker. Prayer for a bicycle, without making the slightest effort in any way to get one, stands but one chance to be answered. But if prayer for a thing is accompanied by mental, physical, or other effort on the part of the prayer-maker, a bicycle may be forthcoming in so rapid and surprising a manner as to seem 'a direct answer to prayer' or 'a providence.' "

"You say that to pray for a thing simply as a request, without any effort to get it, *stands but one chance* of being answered. What do you mean by that?"

"To pray for it at all is a mental effort to gain it. Now, the invisible power of thought, as we have intimated, is often, and almost invariably, stronger than people suppose. To pray is to will more or less determinedly. To will is often to accomplish on the spot. The conditions must be harmonious, and to the

As It is to Be

righteous and pure in heart the conditions are apt to be harmonious, so that to will, and to express that will in prayer, thus at the same time exalting the nature into the spiritual realm where *will* is the basal quality of power, is to draw forces into a focus towards the thing willed for ; and the result is, that it is done, and the astonished and grateful recipient calls it a *providence*, and blesses God for interfering in his behalf and *answering* his prayer, whereas God had no more to do with it than the persistently carrying on of His laws, which, if *intelligently taken advantage of*, may always be made to favor the individual ; as a broad current will carry a floating canoe, strongly propelled by human arms, more rapidly and well than it can carry a water-soaked log, drifting aimlessly along and striking against every snag !

“Do we wonder that an Indian in his swift canoe can outstrip the fallen branch that simply lends itself to the laws of gravitation ? Is it a providence that he makes twenty miles an hour down stream ?

Providence

“So with intelligent effort — mental, physical, moral, spiritual! Unless a man puts a shoulder to the wheel, the stuck wagon, floundering in the mud, cannot be gotten along. For human life is always going through difficult and muddy ways, up-hill and over streams and across marshes and over mountains, — an infinite variety, calling for wit, wisdom, will, tact, capacity, endurance, persistence, courage; and if you add these to prayer, believe me, your ‘go-cart’ will be trundled along — yea, to the very end.”

“Then *Providence*, in the sense of a special care bestowed on an individual in the direction of saving from danger, restoring property, assisting in accumulating material things, preventing sickness and death, allowing escape from an accident, or other phases of seeming especial favor, does not exist?”

“It does not from the *outside*, as you mean. You are your own Providence. You have been given a universe of things and forces to manipulate, according to the purity and intelligence and strength of your own will. The

As It is to Be

invisible forces are as potent, as active and as real as the visible forces. Your bodily consciousness dictates how you shall use your material forces, and your spiritual consciousness dictates how you shall use your spiritual forces. Either one or the other predominates at each present moment. Frequently, in prayer, the spiritual force of your will predominates. This draws to your aid the invisible forces which you unconsciously manipulate, and what you strongly wish for succeeds, and you master it and hold it and have it.

“It is very much like a problem in arithmetic. You desire to conquer the problem, which exists abstractly in a realm that your mind seems vainly to penetrate. You cannot see the answer, or prefigure it. But you now *will to know it*, and at once have taken the first step to know it; then you make your calculations, use your figures, and one by one you master each, and at last accomplish the right answer. You marshal invisible forces to your aid, which cannot fail to illumine your mind as you persist. At last you step

Providence

into that abstract and unknown realm that seemed so vague, and find yourself at home there."

"According to this, wherein comes the Fatherhood of God? To believe God does care for *me* is the sweetest thing in all my conception of my Maker. My chief gratitude to Jesus Christ is, that He proclaimed that God is our *loving Father*, that we are of much greater value than many sparrows, that even the hairs of our heads are numbered, that He loves us with an everlasting love, that we are His *children*, and that we cannot suffer without His sympathy!"

"In what, of all this, is there any need of providences! Do you wish to prove God's fatherhood by the exceptions He makes in your favor? For instance, if you intended going on a ship that was burned at sea and all souls lost, but were prevented from embarking and were thus saved from death, would you consider that a token of God's loving care over you?"

"Many would."

As It is to Be

“How about those who were lost?”

“Yes, I know. It is absurd, for that would not be fatherly love at all, but just jealous partiality towards His favorites.”

“And about obtaining material blessings? Have you not murmured when you have seen truly selfish and unprincipled people rolling in wealth while some poor saint went hungry?”

“Yes, indeed!”

“You did not see any providence in a cold-blooded capitalist making another million by defrauding the poor?”

“No.”

“And you wondered that some of those poor souls did not escape the loss of their little all by means of a providence?”

“It would have seemed just.”

“So it would, child, if there were any such thing as especial providences, interfering, disposing, organizing, changing, re-ordering, and re-moulding the sequent events of active existence. Were there such intervention mortals might well cry out at the injustice of God,

Providence

which strips the miserable to add to the ease of the surfeited ! Thus you see that by looking at the other side of the question, the idea of a *Providence* to anybody has its veto plainly discernible within its own essence. To favor one at the expense of another, by direct intervention, wholly overthrows all idea of the freedom of will, the law of cause and effect, and the impartiality of God, thus wiping out the fatherhood and love of God, to make Him an arbitrary ruler, whiffling this way or that, according to the 'prayer of faith' of any child who may be praying at exact opposites with any other child ! "

"And yet, strange coincidences do occur, wonderful answers to prayer, strange escapes from accident, amazing benefits to those at their wit's end how to live, etc., etc."

"The sweet gratitude in human nature, which is a Godlike Godpart of the soul, attributes these to the all-loving care of the Father for His children. It is a beautiful thing to watch the humble thankfulness of the world in receiving these favors with an

As It is to Be

immediate thanksgiving to a supernatural power! But while that glorious Power is truly to be praised forever, for having so wisely arranged the universal laws and human beings that they may have harmonious and successful mutual relations — to attribute *direct interposition* to either increase, assist, re-direct, or reverse those laws, to produce any circumstance whatsoever of what seems to be a providential incident, is to *do wrong*, since it is the subversion of truth and the acceptance of ignorant falsehood.

“Try to have a broader conception, first of God, then of law, and then of yourself. The one, eternal, is your source; the second, ever-active, is your preserver; the third, immortal, is possessed of powers that reach out and on, back to Perfection, even the *Father*, of which it is the Child.”

“Nevertheless, I think the world will be slow to accept this impersonal governing, this self-providence, which, while true, is cold and lonesome to the heart. Say what one may of

Providence

truth, if it is abstract — a truth of law rather than of love — it seems to fall short, and leaves the soul craving and hungry. I want to feel when I speak to God that He hears me, and that His soul responds to my soul, and that the ecstasy of union which I have sometimes felt between Him and me has been a real spiritual union of affection and reciprocal feeling, as a child may glow with reverent admiration of her father, and the father glow with tender pride in his child."

"In what wise does the question of Providences enter here?"

"Why, you say prayer is but an expression of the will! — that it effects nothing unless followed or accompanied by effort."

"Oh, no! we did not say that! We said prayer had many uses. Do not mix up your ideas.

"PROVIDENCES CAN ONLY REFER TO MATERIAL THINGS, — THE THINGS OF THE EARTH, THE ACCIDENTS, INCIDENTS, AND PHENOMENA OF THE WORLD! THEY ARE RELATED SOLELY TO THE CONSERVATION OF

As It is to Be

MATERIAL INTERESTS, THE GOOD OF THE BODY AND THE THINGS OF THE BODY.

“When a prayer about any of these earthly things is made it is a prayer which must involve the laws by which earthly relations are maintained, and is thus necessarily amenable to those laws, or else unsuccessful.

“For instance, you may pray that your trip to the West may be taken with safety and comfort. By thus praying, whatever invisible powers may be manipulated by your spirit will be drawn favorably towards you, and if you select a good train, over a well-established road, you will probably get there in safety. Nevertheless, you may be burnt alive in your sleeper, for you are no more exempt than another from the natural sequences of law. But in prayer which seeks no *material* benefit, there is no supposition of a *Providence*.”

“Then God does hear and does answer?”

“Aye, child! The universe thrills with the joy and trembles with the bliss of the communion of the child-soul with the Father-soul, throughout eternity. The ecstasy you

Providence

have felt of pure and holy communion with God is the best reality in all existence, and will forever continue in beauty, purity, joy, and uplifting, until you disappear in the Celestial Light whither all souls tend."

"What are the invisible forces which we may unconsciously manipulate by will, prayer, thought?"

"They may be the affections and cares of spirit friends, granted the privilege of watching over you; or they may be the innate powers of your own soul — as the impressing of your desire upon other persons, the suggesting and persuading by means of your thought, the hypnotic forces of your personal magnetism, the intuitive perception of the circumstances and characters of others, the faculty of clairvoyantly looking forward, and other powers of which you are unconscious, but which you can focus into a strong, active, aggressive motor to work out your desire. Will is the root of this. Use it firmly, wisely, righteously."

"Unrighteous will succeeds."

As It is to Be

“Certainly, on earth, where there is a choice of evil and good, strong unrighteous will is as potent as the other.”

“The result?”

“Is inevitable. Such do not develop good, and so come to us weak, ignorant, infantine in true *life*.”

“I think, then, that as regards our earthly existence we should say with the Christ, ‘Thy will be done,’ and then use our own will with all our might to get what we want!”

“If you say it reverently and act it righteously, you will have struck the keynote of earthly prosperity. God’s will is in the laws which He has beneficently established, and He gave you your will to use upon those laws, with all intelligence, for your own benefit.

“Before we leave you to-day we wish to correct a phrase which you have used, ‘a truth of law rather than of love.’ There are no truths and no laws which are not founded in and conserved wholly of love. Love rules everything, wisdom guides everything. If any truth seems abstract to you, you can always

Providence

fall back on the consoling thought that, since it is *truth*, it is love manifested in righteousness. You also have a latent thought in your mind, that if there are no especial providences there can also be no miracles. You can apply all we have said of Providences to miracles and find they both come under one law. A so-called miracle is the unusual manipulation of things by a well-ordered will. As for 'natural' miracles, as that fire will not burn or water drown, there is nothing of the kind."

CHAPTER XXII

THOUGHT

DURING the writing of this manuscript I have placed it in the hands of some of the brightest and most cultivated people of this country. They have all read or heard it with interest. Some have believed that the Voices are actual spirits, who impress me with the words that I here put on to paper. Others have said that they believe I have a "dual consciousness," and that these writings, which I call interior Voices, are in reality but the answers that I give to myself out of the stored knowledge, imagination, or fancy which, through a somewhat general course of reading, I have absorbed. Some call it my higher self.

Many ask me what I believe myself is the true origin of the answers to my questions. I can only answer that I do not know. I know that these answers sound in my brain

Thought

in about the same tone of voice which I use myself. I know that when I ask the question my mind is frequently blank as to the reply. Often I have a preconceived opinion which I find is wrong (if the Voices are right), and although I feel as if I were talking with another person, and am impressed that I do not answer my own questions, still I do not know who it is who answers, save in the very first I imagined it might be a very dear friend, from his description of his death, and later on I think it truly was my grandfather Pond who gave me a few sentences.

Otherwise I cannot conceive who or what the Voices are. They appear to me as *thought*. I do not physically hear them, but I do get thought which appears to me far above my own capacity and often in exact opposition to my own opinions.

Since, then, neither I myself nor any one else can positively determine what is the true origin of this work, I will now ask the Voices themselves about thought, and let them say what are its powers, visible and invisible.

As It is to Be

Answer: " We are quite willing to aid you in discovering the true origin of your work, and by those who have the least intuition it will be readily perceived that we are not 'stored knowledge, imagination, or fancy.' We are *truth*, and we assure you that we shall impress the world as being true, for our thoughts are not as their thoughts, neither can they as yet comprehend them. Thought is immortal and eternal. It is the 'I,' the dominant 'I' of everything created. Without thought, you, man, animals, trees, all the order of Nature, are but things. Destitute of thought, or foresight, or will, or design, or intuition, the universe were a dead blank, a nothing. It would never have existed.

"God infused thought when He blew His breath into the nostrils of the primeval races. He infused thought when He fanned into eternal flame the sun of your universe. He endowed with His thought the shell you pick up on your seashore to hear the hollow roar of the main sound roundly in your ears.

Thought

“It is thought that has uttered forth and brought into being all that is or ever shall be, and the roots of the tree of life are imbedded in the fecund soil of Eternal Thought, which sends its sap to every branch and twig, and blossoms in the petals of every flower. Thought is motion, force, gravitation, and every law which, by years of mortal striving, has slowly been brought in the cognizance of mortal mind. Withdraw for one instant the thought which holds the stars in place, and space would become a place of inextricable confusion, running riot in eternal mutual destruction. Thought is the regulator, the harmonizer of all conflicting elements, for in its potent grasp it holds worlds and suns and universes with the ease of infinite power.

“Take thought from yourself and you become a thing. What are you without thought? A shell, a case, a garment, soon repulsive, soon dust, soon nothingness. Out of the Infinite Thought you came, back to the Infinite Thought you go, leaving that nothingness which soon your material form becomes,

As It is to Be

and soaring above the thing you once so loved. It is as an outcome of thought that man exists, and his utter dependence upon thought is an idea he would do well to more fully appreciate."

"All we actually are, then, is what we think?"

"That is all. For the outcome of thought in deeds is a mere expression. If you do anything whatever, thought was the force that compelled you to do it."

"It is the motive, then, not the deed, that counts?"

"Yes, but be very sure that the motive which appears clear and fair to you is not mixed."

"Who shall sift a mixed motive?"

"Yourself shall."

"Is there no other Judge or judgment?"

"Nay. Law is law. Whether you wish or no, you must abide by it. The evil motive in you is forever cast aside, the good is forever taken up higher. Beware lest the evil should predominate. But again to thought

Thought

and thoughts. For some days you have been questioning in your mind what is the force of thought?"

"Yes, that is true. I have wondered if unuttered thought is a force, and if so, is there any way to avail one's self of it for one's advantage?"

"You can. Every person can who chooses to do so. The average thought of the world to-day is what one may call desultory, casual, without any especial end or aim to it. Go down on to Broadway and enter a horse-car. What harmony of thought obtains there? One man thinks of stocks; one man, of drugs; one, of his sick wife; one woman, of how to match a ribbon; one child, of a grammar lesson; the driver, of his horses; and yourself, of the last book you have read, or whether you can secure tickets for a matinée. It is a mixture which is simply beyond definition. There is no sequence, no mingling, no harmony, no leading from one idea to another. It is an *olla-podrida* of incongruous elements. There is apparently

As It is to Be

no possible association of ideas in the whole community save in audiences, colleges, and schools, where people come together for the acknowledged purpose of listening to a certain theme.

“But be not deceived. Nothing exists outside of law. There is design and oversight for ‘every idle word ye utter.’ Each has its appropriate place, and wings its way with unswerving course to its one and only position in the general mass. You look out at night and view the myriad stars and seem to see no regularity to their positions. You cannot understand why some are grouped, some single, some by twos, and some in clusters. The astronomer can give you many ideas, but even he cannot see the true meaning of this conglomerate mass, although his sagacity has reached the knowledge of a harmonious law. So you vainly try to probe the meaning of human thought, still more ignorant that it, too, is governed by harmonious law and seeks its own as surely as the law of gravitation causes planet to seek sun and

Thought

bend in its orbit with obedience to the central force. In thought, as in everything else, like seeks like. Melancholy thoughts seek the stratum of melancholy. Wise, studious thoughts seek the stratum of wisdom. Gay, sunny thoughts go to the stratum of cheerfulness with a joyous bound."

"What do you mean by stratum or strata of thought?"

"The atmosphere of the world is permeated by a spiritual atmosphere, which is, as it were, in layers or strata, and each of these layers is made up of certain spiritual idea-facts, which are represented with you by thoughts expressed in words. Your thoughts form a connecting link between yourself and the range of thought that corresponds to your feelings and spiritual condition."

"Do we send our thoughts out to that layer which matches them?"

"Yes. Projecting yourself by means of your thought, you may enter the stratum of misery and foreboding and inevitably absorb and retain the forces which that stratum of

As It is to Be

thought holds. Projecting yourself by means of your thought you may enter the realm of luxurious, artistic, refined, cultivated thoughts and instantly absorb and retain for yourself some portion of the forces of those strata.

“Seek poverty and sorrow in your thought, and you become just so much poorer and more sorrowful in actual being. Seek a successful stratum, carry will with your thought, take attention and attraction on either hand, and you enter the stratum of well-being, and the longer you exercise the forces of will, attention, and attraction in this stratum, the more you absorb and retain of its beneficent sway.”

“Do you mean to say that if I persist in thinking of myself as being happy, rich, independent, wise and cultivated, I shall actually become all these?”

“Your tendency will certainly be in those directions, and the forces of those strata of thought will react on you to exactly the extent you not only attract but apply them. Do not think that mere sitting still and thinking you

Thought

are rich will actually make you so, without further effort of your own. To really will, attract, and set your attention on prosperity is to carry out to the best of your means the wisest plans you can conceive to secure it; and having a cheerful faith that you will succeed puts you in harmony with every force which sweeps toward higher and better things."

"What is the spiritual stratum made of; what is it?"

"It is the reality, the Eternal verity of thought in its essence. All thought is first born in the spirit. It is then expressed, either mentally, or both mentally and actually in sound, through the medium of the brain. The atmosphere of spiritual thought that surrounds the earth is of human emanation."

"It seems, then, that thought strata are principally made up of the emotions. Melancholy, anger, joy, ambition, grief,—these are the emotional elements of human nature, and it seems that angry thoughts add to the strataic forces (if I may coin a word for the occasion) of anger in general, while kind and

As It is to Be

loving thoughts augment the strataic forces of peace and tenderness ? ”

“ Exactly so. Anger, discontent, indignation, hatred, envy, malice, and all uncharitableness go in thought-form to their own peculiar place, and when these forces become overmuch, dominating the forces of true human brotherhood, they produce war, dissension, lawsuits, murder, robbery, and crimes of every kind. Epidemic diseases become more widely spread by the thoughts of the multitude drawing upon themselves the massed fears of the community, — currents of thought flowing like rivers over the heads of those who constantly add to their depth. Every evil wish or unrighteous desire adds to the thought-force of criminality, sensuality, lawlessness, and anarchy.

“ Out of a concentrated mass of wrong opinions, wrong motives, wrong wishes, revolution, revolt, tyranny, cruelty, and unreason break out in a city or a country, inflamed first by all that is uttered, and last, but not least, by all that is unuttered but silently

Thought

thought; in many instances bodying forth in terrible eruptions the whole secret power of the body politic.

“Those who make for righteousness in their inner lives — the lives not uttered at all, perhaps, to their neighbors — do more to make a community equable, contented, healthful, prosperous, cultivated, open-handed, and honest than all the teachers and orators put together. They are the silent, earnest, constant power for good, attracting and holding the giant energies of massed thought in harmony with the place they inhabit, and even over the lives and fortunes of those only casually associated with them, they continue a settled agency.”

“Does our silent thought or tendency of thought appeal to or touch upon persons with whom we hold no communication by words or apparent notice, with efficient influence?”

“Your thought is yourself and goes with you wherever you go. So if, for instance, you enter an elevator full of people whom you never saw before, if your thought happens to be pure, sweet, humane, harmonious or

As It is to Be

elevating, you inevitably impart it to the atmosphere and attract to you and to them the forces of such thought out of the general mass. Unaware of it, they absorb it. If you could see as we see, how astonished you would be to note the change wrought in the thought of a group of persons when suddenly a mind of a clear, spiritual nature comes among them. It is like a fresh breeze. They feel it, but do not know how or whence it comes. Virtue goes out to others from all who desire the good of others. If you long to bless the world, you can bless it by being heavenly-minded, prone to charity and goodwill, earnest in endeavor to be better, and strong in faith. Your thought is your atmosphere, which touches other thought atmospheres either for good or evil."

"How did Christ heal the sick? Your speaking of virtue going out to others, reminds me that when the sick woman touched His garments He felt 'virtue go out of Him,' and as she had such absolute faith she was healed."

Thought

“Simply take that as a supreme illustration of what we have been saying. The Christ, divinely pure, with His soul longing to bless, heal, save, was in harmony, absolutely, with the thought-strata of all health, all prosperity, and all righteousness. There was nothing in His nature to alloy or debase the pure energy of goodness or virtue, which, in other words, is *Eternal Life*, to which, with perfect faith, He appealed. There was no obstacle of mixed motive to prevent His will from operating on and attracting to Himself the whole concentrated energy of thought, which represented health and happiness ; He was *en rapport* with unadulterated spirit, therefore instantaneously His atmosphere and then His thought responded to the woman’s perfect faith in Him, and the ‘miracle’ was performed by simple, complete obedience to God’s natural, spiritual law.”

“That is certainly a new interpretation of miracle.”

“It is the true one.”

“I have often wondered if evil prayers are ever answered ?”

As It is to Be

“ They practically are not heard as prayers. They add their quota of evil thought-force to the general mass of mortal thought, but no evil prayer can enter or be recognized in the realm of spirit, and it produces no response there. The spirit has no ear for evil, no eye for evil, no sense for evil. Therefore an evil thought cannot penetrate into spiritual consciousness.”

“ You are a spirit, are you not ? ”

“ I am.”

“ Yet you are talking of evil. Have you no spiritual consciousness of evil ? ”

“ Not as you mean it. I do not mean to say that a spirit cannot understand that evil exists, or cannot see it going on, or cannot desire to alleviate the misery it causes. We have a consciousness of the evil *in mortality*, but no consciousness of evil in ourselves or in our surrounding atmosphere. We cannot respond to evil desires, because we have no evil desires. There is no attraction or harmony. You cannot mingle water and oil by just shaking them together. We enter into

Thought

the mortal atmosphere and see all that goes on therein, but we no more mix with it or are a part of it than you can mix a glass of water with a bottle of oil."

"The material, then, is wholly thrown off? I ask this advisedly."

"The material is wholly thrown off."

"Yet you, as a thought, have a form?"

"Yes, certainly."

"Can that form penetrate material?"

"Easily."

"For instance, can you go through a stone wall?"

"Why not? What is to hinder? There is no substance which we cannot penetrate. Substance does not exist to us."

"Are you affected by heat or cold?"

"No."

"Are you affected by gases, electricity, or chemical combinations?"

"No."

"Are you as much at ease in a howling blizzard as in a warm summer's day?"

"We feel no perturbation whatever by your storms."

As It is to Be

“According to that, should you so desire, you could approach the sun until you fairly were within its flaming ball.”

“We can. But why do you ask this?”

“I desire to perfectly understand the immutability of spirit. For I am most anxious when I become a spirit to do just that. In defiance of all material conditions, I wish to visit and see for myself the planets, comets, stars, nebulae, and all on or in them, so that I may fully understand the glory of God.”

“There is no reason why you should not, as long as you are in harmony with His will.”

“But you say in spirit one cannot be out of harmony with His will.”

“Thank Him, no. That was only an expression. But He may not at once permit such journeys. If He does not you will not wish to go. But in all probability there will be no reason why you should not follow out your wish to the utmost.”

“I can hardly wait to explore this world, for instance.”

“Yes, it is natural that you should first

Thought

wish to know your native planet. When you join us, if you wish to visit the most inaccessible portions of the globe, you will not necessarily go alone. Thousands share your pure desire to know their Mother Earth in all her phases of grandeur and beauty. You will be accompanied by the poet, the thinker, the scholar, the traveller, or if you prefer, you may go in solitude, led with unerring guidance by the law of attraction with you.

“You will, perhaps, be escorted by a sea-captain who glories in the remembrance of successful battles with the deep, and who notes with a smile the ports and bays where his good ship lay at anchor. The geologist, no longer hampered, will point out to you the primeval rocks, or with swift and fearless energy make his way with you beneath the earth’s brown crust to explore the hidden depths of her interior being.

On mountain heights of snowy peaks, where it were almost death for a man to venture, you may stay at ease surveying with joy the plain stretching out before you, or, retir-

As It is to Be

ing into space by a simple thought, may behold the speckled globe with its cities and shores, oceans and continents, roll its huge sides around beneath your gaze, until from 'China to Peru,' from 'Greenland's icy mountains to India's coral strand,' her magnificent panorama shall do its best to fascinate and hold your willing and enchanted eyes.

"Nor is this all. Mere sight without comprehension were but the tapping of a drumstick on a drum. Laws, forces, beauties, harmonies, growing out of a general grouping and massing of the whole in the consciousness, appear to the spirit in clear and simple directness, each taking its own place in the grand result and never altering from the mandate by a hair. That mandate is Love, universal Love, which shapes all things unto righteousness — and believe us, never was a truer saying than that 'the hairs of your head are all numbered,' or that 'not a sparrow falleth to the ground without your Father.'"

CHAPTER XXIII

THE GOD-SOUL OF MAN

THESE sweet words gave my soul exquisite rest. But soon after the last writing I again began : "Many people imagine that God made a set of laws, all tending to the best good of His children, and then practically left His children to work out their own salvation. 'I can imagine,' say some, 'that God cares for us in a general way, but when I think of this little, insignificant ball on which I move, and then of my small, insignificant self, as compared with His universe, I cannot believe that He notices me in particular, or has anything especial to do with my life.'"

"What can they mean?"

"Why, I suppose that they cannot imagine so great a being condescending to notice or care for so small a being as a man or woman."

As It is to Be

“Do you not care for your own?”

“We certainly do.”

“Do you care for the drops of blood in your own bodies?”

“Certainly. Is this a comparison?”

“You and all like you are God.”

“We are God?”

“Insomuch as His spirit is in you, you are God.”

“Kindly explain this.”

“You have no selfhood, really. You are you, only because He has permitted a part of Himself to enter an individual form. Your selfhood consists in being endowed with an individuality of thought different from other individualities of thought, but should He recall that endowment you would become no longer a self, but selfless in Him.”

“Is it likely He will?”

“I know not. Many have disappeared out of our realm of consciousness.”

“Is that what you meant when you said you did not know if Christ was in the God-head, you had never seen him out of it?”

The God-Soul of Man

“I think I could not have meant that exactly. Note what I have just said. I said, ‘Many have disappeared out of our realm of consciousness;’ that presupposes that they were once within our realm of consciousness. He never was. I believe, and we all believe, that He was one with God, and there was no necessity for progression where perfection already obtained.”

“If many have disappeared from your realm of consciousness, how do you know that they did not go into that realm of ‘outer darkness’ where is ‘weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth’?”

“I know it because there is no ‘outer darkness,’ and they were as Gods among us, whose knowledge of the Higher Goodness made them beyond all words radiant with perfect light. They were the angels, the leaders, so far in advance of us in recognized goodness that we thrill with heavenly joy just to remember the glance of their beautiful eyes! Alas! that none on earth have seen such, nor can see! And how near it

As It is to Be

brings us to earth by comparison! How little we have advanced when we compare ourselves with those mighty, lovely ones who have gone on and up by their own inherent purity!

“Ah! my child, you have touched us with almost a mortal feeling of helplessness in asking us these searching questions. But even now we know that you and every man and every woman will yet be unutterably lovely in the brightness of unspeakable splendor. Why, then, even for a moment, suggest that life Eternal is a task? Nay, rather a sweet and swift movement upward, borne on by the ever-present attraction of Love for its own; which, let it act upon the spirit when or where it will, in the body or out of the body, bears its divine command of Joy to every created being.”

“You say that those lovely highest angels have ‘disappeared out of your realm of consciousness.’ Do they ever return?”

“They may.”

“But, alas! that again presupposes separa-

The God-Soul of Man

tion. Is it a second death? For if they go — are lost out of your consciousness — what is the difference between that and our friends' dying, going out of our realm of consciousness? It is separation any way you can arrange it."

"Yes, but what a glorious separation! On earth you have no absolute knowledge of eternal life. Here we know there is no death, loss, nor end. If a queen-mother feels her heart throb with joy and exultant pride when her noble son, grown to manly strength and understanding, ascends the throne amid the rejoicings of his people, and, in answer to their glad acclaims, pledges himself to equity, mercy, wisdom, and honor, as the head and leader of the nation, how much more do thousands of queen-mothers in Heaven lift up their voices of joy when their sons, having attained the high prize of perfection, so far as we know it, enter into the realm of Divine Holiness, and receive the honors due to merit!

"All Heaven is in festival and in brighter glory when that grand occasion is announced,

As It is to Be

and even as a gallant ship is welcomed by a thousand voices when she comes into port after a long battle with wind and sea, so millions cry out with sympathetic pleasure and beautiful anticipation when one among them goes to the Celestials. Then, indeed, can be seen a multitude that no man can number, bearing palm branches of unutterable peace, and singing hosannas to Him that sitteth upon the Throne! For we all shall join Him, even you, every man and every human being. Not soon, not perhaps for centuries, but finally; and every moment of your time, and every impulse of good by which we measure ours, brings each to the sweet, bright boundary, which, set like a wall of precious stones about the Throne, is inscribed forever and ever with the meaning, —

HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD!"

CHAPTER XXIV

THE DRAMA — A DAY IN HEAVEN

SOME time elapsed, after reading over this last utterance, before I could bring myself to begin again. The words seemed sacred. They seemed, in a few sentences, to comprehend a vast circle of ideas and an almost infinite vista of progress. Indeed as I had written during so many months, there had appeared to be a growth of spiritual knowledge within myself which seemed as if absorbed from some unknown source. I found myself positively freed from all fear of death and had imbibed a gentler acceptance of life. I then resumed a former train of thought.

“The fact that we are born on this planet seems to differentiate us from other intelligent beings, does it not? Each inhabited globe has its peculiar people?”

As It is to Be

“Flowers differ in color and odor, yet are all rooted in the same earth. So worlds and their races differ, yet are all from the same Source.”

“You have stated with considerable emphasis that ‘memory is the birth-gift of earth.’ What do you mean by that?”

“We mean that life exists in many forms and phases before it reaches the human condition, but not until it reaches earth and assumes a mortal form is it endowed with memory. Many of your physical senses were developed before your physical organism was completely formed, and not until memory entered into its composition were you an intelligent and intellectual being.”

“Do you mean to say that my body has been in a process of evolution, and that when it had finally evolved into a human form that it was endowed with a new power which we call memory?”

“No, I do not mean that your actual body born of your mother was evolved from a still lower form of body similar to it. I mean that

The Drama— A Day in Heaven

the elements of which your body is composed have always been in existence somewhere, in some form, going through different phases and conditions of existence, and that it was not until they were gathered into a definite form, which you call human, that they became endowed with spirit or the true life, which includes memory as the essential quality of individuality. And it is earth which gives this birth-gift to otherwise unconscious matter."

"In that case, we might call earth the planet of memory."

"Yes, as we might call Venus the planet of love."

"Why, does the planet Venus endow her inhabitants with that quality?"

"You do not understand me. I do not mean to say that earth, *as a planet*, has power to endow her inhabitants with memory. I mean that the human form is the highest form on earth, and that form is thus endowed."

"On other planets there are other forms, perhaps, endowed with other powers?"

As It is to Be

“There certainly are.”

“This appears to lead to the doctrine of transmigration of souls from one planet to another, living a life in each and attaining different powers in each. It is a very old doctrine. Is there any truth in it?”

“No.”

“And yet you say that the other planets are inhabited?”

“Some are.”

“By human beings?”

“No. Human beings are earth-born beings, and that is why I called memory the gift of earth.”

“Are the inhabitants of other planets endowed with souls? When they die do they become spirits?”

“Some do, and some do not. They differ in glory both materially and spiritually.”

“Are the inhabitants of earth the most or the least spiritual of the dwellers on the planets?”

“Neither. But it is useless for you to try to prove anything by this means of investiga-

The Drama — A Day in Heaven

tion. We cannot bring convincing scientific proof to bear on the question. As you cannot see and have never seen, cannot hear and have never heard, the inhabitants of another planet, we cannot convince you that there are such."

"Andrew Jackson Davis, the clairvoyant, declares he has seen the inhabitants of other planets, and even describes them."

"He may have, but the world in general does not believe it, neither do you, actually. And right here and now, let us explain why we do not tell you great scientific truths, or unfold scientific laws, or give you discoveries and proofs of things outside of your material world in the worlds of matter beyond. We have actually nothing to do with the material. Although as in the present instance, we are obliged to make use of the material to convey spiritual truth, we only use the material, that is, your brain and pen, as a medium to express what otherwise you could not know by any other means. *It is not intended by God that anything that the human mind is capable of*

As It is to Be

discovering for itself should be handed to it like a free gift.

“For instance, as I used the picture of the geologist plunging into the centre of the earth, you wondered why I did not go on and say what he would find there, whether a solid interior of fire, a nucleus of rock, and then a layer of fire, and then the crust, or whatever else it might prove to be. In time this will all be determined by science, and we have no permission nor right to steal from human intellect its chance of glory and strength, by telling beforehand the secrets it delights to gradually discover.

“In the realm of matter all that man needs to know can be brought to light by him, and it is his zeal for knowledge and brave defiance of obstacles, his patient waiting and observing, his almost miraculous sagacity and power of concentration, which have produced the high rate of natural intellectual force in the mass of the people to-day. The leaders, the workers, the thinkers, leaven the whole lump with the fire of their transcendent genius, and it

The Drama—A Day in Heaven

would be a poor part for a spirit to play to crush out and render useless the very ambition for knowledge and growth which makes humanity but little lower than the angels, the pride and the amazement of the universe.

“Definite knowledge of spiritual law and life must be communicated knowledge, for however deep his intuition or sure his penetration, man cannot truly search the spiritual by himself. Contact with spirit and spiritual thought alone can correctly inform him of his spiritual nature and destiny. He cannot work out that problem without help, for he has no spiritual data or phenomena unconnected with spirit. *Material cannot translate spirit to his consciousness.* For this reason One spirit, the highest, entered into the form of a man and became a living link, binding together, henceforth and forever, the material and the spiritual. He established a connection. He is the wire, one may say, over which messages may run from Heaven to earth. He said He was the Door and the Way, and in so far as we may follow Him we also endeavor to show

As It is to Be

you the Door and lead you to that Way, which is the Resurrection and the Life."

"It seems to me that the world is constantly becoming more interested in everything pertaining to the subject. I hardly take up a paper or periodical of any kind without finding some narrative, article, story, or anecdote touching upon the very varied phenomena generally attributed to 'spirits.' But will this settle into any actual knowledge? Will the time come when we shall be familiar with the true causes of phenomena and be able to manipulate them for our use? For instance, is there any way to harmonize and make effective the casual, desultory, mixed thought of the crowd?"

"No, not at once. Education in spiritual law will finally effect it. When children are taught in school that prosperity to themselves and the world is secured as much by thought as by deed, and *morality of thought is as essential as morality of action*; when youth comprehend that harmony with goodness means harmony with happiness, as well in

The Drama — A Day in Heaven

a material as in a religious and spiritual sense ; when men and women stave off and conquer illness by will and thought, assisting with spiritual force the activity of remedial materials, — then will begin to grow of itself a tendency to harmonious thought ; and science, by data of observed phenomena, will soon give to the world rational rules whereby thought shall be controlled and exercised in a way to gain the greatest good for the greatest number. Meantime many like you will first give the hint. This is a mission worthy to satisfy most."

"May I not now be indulged by being told something of Heaven in its sweetest aspect ? I mean, in its union of families, its mating of lovers, its amusements, its pleasures. All these very great and moral ideas about laws and forces are of course essential in your dictation to me, but again I must plead for something that shall satisfy the poetry, the romance, the affections of my soul. Can you not describe to me a day in Heaven ? Tell me what ordinary spirits like mine do there

As It is to Be

after they have become accustomed to their new state of being and are at ease among all the bright lights and immensities of Eternity?"

"You say it would be a great pleasure to you to travel. Yet on earth, when you think of travel, what does it involve? Always more or less anxiety, expense, danger, weariness, deprivation and annoyance. What would you think if you could travel and see all the wonders of your world and other worlds, without fatigue or fear?"

"No tired, hot feet; no chafed skin; no weary, dazzled eyes; no thirsty throat; no cold or hunger; no anxiety as to where you shall sleep; no necessity to consult time-tables, or to arrange for your baggage! What if you could speed silently, swiftly, securely, to any desired place in all God's universe, to see or do whatever suited your sweetly righteous fancy? What if that dear one, that appreciative soul, who could always understand and sympathize with every thought and feeling of your heart, could go with you

The Drarna — A Day in Heaven

and enjoy all you enjoyed? If there be pictures, shall you not see them? If there be gardens, shall you not wander in their paths! If a collector has spent years in getting together the rarest and most beautiful specimens of art, shall any one hinder your delighted observation? Whatever is innocent and noble and right that your disenthralled spirit wishes to do, that it may do, without let or hindrance, trouble, pain, or payment of any kind.

“This is the freedom and light of the occupations of Heaven. The poet may turn him to his poetry; the mother to her little ones; the lover of mechanics shall study from sublime examples and by eternal principles. The tired worker shall lie at ease and rest; the heart bowed down with earthly trial shall be filled with a sense of luxurious happiness — more blessed because so unanticipated. Those who were held to the wheel of the world's toil, undeveloped in mind and morals and spiritual insight, shall be so divinely recompensed in their new life that their glad

As It is to Be

laughter shall re-echo through the soft valleys of their sunlit homes.

“Believe me, to be born a human being is a glorious thing! It is to have bestowed upon one, for the price of a few years of educational probation in the body, that individual consciousness which can never die, and which, once the chrysalis of the flesh is left behind, enters a form so well adapted to its best condition that it is self-sustaining, and no longer a hamper upon the freedom of the mind. But respect that flesh! Respect and honor the splendid environment which has been given to your entity on earth! Thank God for the delicate, yet strong, complex yet perfect body which gives expression to your present condition of existence. Conserve its noble energies; preserve pure the well-spring of the blood; use and never abuse it; keep it holy! Earth is now your God-designed dwelling-place: your body is the Temple of His Spirit! Live harmoniously within, until you are called to your next phase of progressive experience.

The Drama — A Day in Heaven

“And then, of other occupations: you are very fond of the drama, are you not?”

“Exceedingly, when good.”

“Did you ever expect to find a drama in Heaven?”

“I might have, if you yourselves had not shut out that idea! You say that nothing evil can enter there! So how can you possibly have any drama? The drama is made up of the lights and shades of human emotion. It cannot be a story of endless felicity. There must be contrast. It represents crimes, tragedies, wrongs, mysteries, and all sorts of evil complications, such as are supposed to be constantly taking place in real life; and if there were none such, there could be no story, for to make triumphs of virtue, one must have something to triumph over, and to work out a plot with any pith or point, there must be wrongs to avenge or to overcome. Unless it is all farce or light comedy, I do not see how there can be any drama in Heaven.”

“But what do you suppose becomes of dramatists and actors? There have been great

As It is to Be

earthly geniuses in both lines. They love it. There is nothing necessarily wrong in it. Is their occupation gone because they have entered a more sensitive, keen, perceptive form and state of being? ”

“ Really I cannot answer you. If your rule holds good, I do not see where emotional drama — the drama of jealousy, hatred, intrigue, ambition, as pitted against self-sacrifice, love, candor, self-abandonment for the good of others — can come in.”

“ Well, listen to me. We have a drama which deals with realities. Your drama is that of imagination. ‘ Camille ’ and ‘ Monte Cristo,’ ‘ Juliet ’ and ‘ Petruchio,’ drawn from the fancy and put into imagined situations, are represented by men and women who learn the part and endow the character with their own conception of what it should be like. Here actors and actresses act out their own souls, and make a drama on the spot, under direction of that controlling mind which draws them into harmonious association for the agreed purpose.

The Drama — A Day in Heaven

“Tragedy, comedy or farce, or that higher drama of the intellect which deals with what to you were dry abstractions, is not denied us, for we have the whole world-history of planets from which to draw and re-enact those scenes of gorgeousness and splendor, imperial pomp and historic bravery, which even now thrill and re-thrill the observer with wondering awe.

“If you will observe human nature you will find that deeds of heroism blanch the cheek and fill the eyes as no deeds of evil can. A stage murder causes a shudder or a feeling of horrified disgust, mingled with instinctive hate, indignation, and desire for revenge. But a stage hero in the act of giving up his life, his love, his every hope, to save his honor, fills the audience with a new fire, a new glow, a new love for humanity, a new faith in itself.

“Poems, describing deeds of valor; standing by duty until death; offering all of life for love; carrying fidelity and loyalty to the pitch of self-immolation; martyrdoms for principle; secret struggles with love, — triumphing and giving the beloved one to another: these and

As It is to Be

thousands of examples remain where nothing evil enters into the whole composition, but rather everything that is inspiring, noble, refining and strengthening to the best impulses of the heart. All such enter here.

"Again, much that you call evil, as we have before shown you, is not evil, and much that you call tragedy is not tragedy. To you, death is always the tragedy of tragedies! To us, of course, it is transformed into a simple incident, a momentary break of unconsciousness between one hour and another. You have fainted away, have you not?"

"Yes, and remained unconscious fully half an hour."

"Have you since dwelt on it as the most tragic thing in your life?"

"Why, no; I did not realize much about it even at the time, and certainly have not thought anything particularly about it since."

"Was it frightful or tragic to you?"

"No. I simply fell back, and when I came to consciousness I felt a little weak."

"Please to look upon death in the same

The Drama — A Day in Heaven

way, minus the weakness and plus strength, peace, and happiness. So, to resume, we do have the drama. Human history is full of interesting situations, — far more delightful and fascinating than ever yet have been portrayed upon the stage. Our plots are plots worth having, for they include facts, more perfectly grouped as to harmony and sequence than mortal ever dreamed. Do you not often meet women of whom people say, ‘Her life is far more interesting than any you ever read. If it could be published the whole world would be entranced’ !”

“Oh, yes, I even know a woman whose romance is far superior to any novel or play.”

“If you could have seen the other elements grouped around her, her career would have seemed even more remarkable. To make a Heavenly drama, we have but to group the elements. Of themselves they play with so much *verve* and force that I doubt your thinking the plot insipid! Look into your own life! Can you not remember some dramatic touches? And was the result in

As It is to Be

any way evil? Now put in the lives that put in the dramatic touches; their relations to you and to others! Ah, you begin to be somewhat interested! Now add the supreme moment of love! Now add the supreme moment of faith! Now the supreme moment of self-sacrifice! The scenes are somewhat 'plottish'? I thought so."

"Still, I do not see where you get your contrasts, your shades, your solemnities, fear, horror, doubt, anxiety, suspense, agony, those elements which hold the sympathies and work upon the pity, the loyalty, the enthusiasm of the beholder. You have said that nothing evil is so much as reflected on the spiritual canvas,—it will not take! Then, how can you make dramatic use of evil, which is the only contrast to good that can work a play up to a climax? Who or what is your villain, and what does he pursue?"

"Again you mistake. You are misled by that old theory that every incident of a life, if evil, is noted, classed as evil, and helps to round up one side—the evil side—of a

The Drama — A Day in Heaven

nature. Now, we look at nothing as being actually evil which leads to and actually promotes good, by the resistance it excites and the triumphs of virtue which grow out of it. Untempted innocence is characterless. If evil leads to evil and degenerates the character and finally dominates and subdues the whole nature, that evil is unmitigated. But much classed as evil is disciplinary and remedial, and therefore beneficent, as tending in the end to greater virtue than as if it had never been experienced. A burnt child dreads the fire. Caution is substituted for carelessness, forethought for recklessness. The realization of the misery of evil, its whips and stings of conscience, its shame of heart, is often necessary to bring a mind to a sense of its own unworthiness.

“You were not put on the earth to slumber in undisturbed innocence! You were put there to ‘work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,’ going through all kinds of evils, and if falling, rising again and going on! In that sense evil is not truly evil to

As It is to Be

him who conquers, but a strong stepping-stone. There is no word which is so difficult to define to human consciousness. The good in human nature is developed by just those experiences which are generally termed evils. But were there no such experiences, no temptations, no struggles, there could be no progress, no growth. Man might as well be a tree or a stone, if he were never subjected to trial. He could not be a moral being if he had no choice between right and wrong."

"But you say no evil enters spirit! Are not spirits, then, moral? And if so, how can they be moral if they have no evils with which to contend?"

"Spirits are not moral in the earthly sense of morality. There is no occasion. They have become spiritual beings, and have risen beyond being moral beings in the sense of your idea."

"Well, how can our morals be conserved there? How can the virtue of generosity, for instance, be continued and developed in a place where every one has everything he

The Drama — A Day in Heaven

desires? I should think it behooves us to develop it all we can here, for I do not see but what it is our only chance! The negations of Heaven! How many they must be! They seem to eliminate from the character not only its evils, but its virtues. Just see! No generosity — everybody has everything. No envy — your neighbor has no better than you. No jealousy — each has his mate, who absolutely satisfies in utter confidence. No ambition — every wish is gratified. No pride — we are all on a level. No regret — there is nothing to regret; all is forgiven and forgotten. No hope — all things are realized; there is nothing to hope for! No faith — for faith has become knowledge. No charity — because no one needs charity. No expectation — Heaven has satisfied us. No desires — they have been gratified. No fear — that is all past. No sorrow — that is done with. No doubt — we see face to face. No appetites — we have no physical organization to gratify. No anger — angels can have no temper! No patriotism — we have no coun-

As It is to Be

try and no enemies to awaken patriotism. No self-sacrifice — where each one is perfectly happy there can be nothing to sacrifice one's self for. No suspense — 'we know as we are known.' No weakness — 'for we shall be strong in His likeness.' No economy — for all things are forever provided. No policy — for no motive obtains for policy. No justice — for all has been justly adjusted and there is no question of right and wrong. No compassion — for there are no objects of compassion ; all are happy as we are. No belief — for sight and knowledge are ours.

“ In fact, so many human qualities must become useless in a society where there are no pain, no sickness, no parting, no death, no faults, no sins, no misunderstandings, no mistakes, that one searches about in one's mind to find what may not be stripped from us — what may be allowed to remain intact of all that we have worked so hard to build up here !

“ Character, the outcome of all these qualities, and by means of these qualities made to be what it is, must become, in a state of

The Drama — A Day in Heaven

Heavenly perfection, a useless thing, unless we can find out what the concentrated essence of all these qualities is! For it is plain that we do not need the qualities!" I felt that the spirit smiled very indulgently. "Your characterizations are in many instances far too sweeping, but I can tell you that you become the essence, the kernel, the soul of what those qualities have made you upon earth."

"And what is the essence of character? What are the fittest qualities that will survive in us and give us identity and individuality in Heaven? What is the supreme outcome of these earthly characteristics so familiar to us here?"

"First, Love. That is immortal, eternal. Nothing can ever take that away. In Heaven we all love each other. Next, peace. For without fear, sorrow, and sin, the peace which passeth understanding must forever enter the soul. Next, harmony. Our environment being perfectly adapted to our being, and our spirits to each other, no discord can enter in.

As It is to Be

Next, knowledge, ever increasing, ever unfolding. Next, worship — forever shall we adore the Father Almighty. Next progression — the growth and unfolding of every power towards the higher goodness. Lastly, perfection itself! thus fulfilling the injunction of the Christ, ‘Be ye perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect.’ All tends to the attaining of infinite perfection — that God may be in us and we in Him, that at last God shall be all in all!”

The magnificence of this answer kept me silent for some time. I finally continued :

“But to return to the drama, from which we seem to have so far digressed. You have your opposing features?”

“We have our lights and shades, our contrast and climax actually before us in our drama. The reunion of those long parted by death, mystery, insanity, shipwreck, and disaster, the lover clasping in his arms the love for whom he had waited a life-time, breathing into actual form the emotions of their mutual souls, contain the poetry and romance, the

The Drama — A Day in Heaven

agony and bliss which would be the useless envy of the earthly dramatist, and is the deepest glory and joy of ours."

"In this world the drama is the production of the intellect. What is intellect? It seems it is not actual spirit, although it is all the spirit we can comprehend. When I think of my spirit, *I think of that I think with*, or intellect."

"The intellect is one of the faculties of spirit, just as hearing is one of your faculties."

"According to that, hearing is a faculty of intellect and intellect is a faculty of a still higher power, which is spirit?"

"Exactly so. And mark you, we said *one* of them. You think that intellect is the supreme faculty, because you know of nothing higher than intelligent comprehension, but it is to us only *one* of the attributes which make up the quality of being."

"Well, let us go on."

"In picturing to you the dramatic points of your life, wherein have I brought your errors, your sins, your mistakes? You see, if a life

As It is to Be

has a tendency for good, it does not necessarily shut out the dramatic element. So here."

"Then if you have the drama, of course you have opera, oratorio, orchestra, every kind of musical entertainment?"

"Yes."

"I should like to hear Parepa Rosa sing, and Jenny Lind, Mario, the whole long list. What a glorious possibility!—and to think that they cannot die and leave us again! Or Dante, with his long, melancholy face actually lighted up with a smile. Or Longfellow, reading his poem of 'Two Angels,' now an angel himself!"

"You begin to imagine somewhat nearly the truth. The doings of a day in Heaven are doings of what each one most likes. How many times you have sat with a friend on earth, absorbed in some sweet topic, tenderly harmonious and happy—momentarily gaining life and joy, wisdom and health, from each other—when the envious clock would toll out the hour, and with a sigh the wraps would be hurried on, 'Too long I stayed,' quoted, and

The Drama — A Day in Heaven

Time, the old miser, would send your friend flying, for nobody knew how long an absence. The aggravation of it! The pain of it! The broken continuity of thought! The unsaid word, the forgotten point, the undeveloped plan, the dissatisfaction, the sense of loss and disturbance! Clocks do not strike in Heaven. Union is undisturbed by the necessities of business, trains, mails, and the other paraphernalia that go to make up the factors of civilization or preservation of the race. We are already preserved — to put it in a somewhat comical way; we keep well, too. Intercourse and society have no end of time, or rather no time at all.

“You hurry on earth, because away down deep in your hearts you are afraid you shall die before you get things done. That may not be the conscious motive, but it is the unconscious motive. You hurry to get rich so as to enjoy it before you die. You hurry to marry because you say, ‘Why waste time in living apart?’ You hurry to bed to preserve health enough to go through the task of to-morrow.

As It is to Be

You hurry up for fear you cannot perform it in less time. All the enjoyments depending upon the labor of some one compel time engagements; all the travel, involving accidents on railroads and financial disturbances, if things are not carried on systematically, must 'be on time;' and so you hurry to depots, and rush to steamboats, and are in perpetual toil and turmoil, even to get to a party or to go to a concert. With you, weather, conventionalities, hours, proprieties, customs, and unlimited trivialities of no real meaning or moment hamper all free intercourse. Here, the serenity and ease of inner grace and power; the knowledge of endless harmony, prevents that eager strain and anxiety which so detract from the joys of earth.

"The rule of goodness unlocks every door and flings the whole universe wide open for the uses and enjoyments of God's children. Moving quicker than light can move, with endless ages in which to meet every possible want or longing of the spirit, with every force pushing for us instead of against us, and

The Drama — A Day in Heaven

every hope of old fulfilled in some best way — a way we recognize as the very most blessed that can be, — our Heavenly days pass in those delightful occupations which, highest in imagination, picture themselves to you as most agreeable, and which after that transcend the sweetest dream, the richest fruit of industry, the noblest attainment of science, the purest conception of Love, that humanity ever bodied forth in song, wove into material, studied and wrested from the universe, or drew from the trembling heartstrings in a chord of majestic music.

“Day in Heaven is eloquence and beauty. Day in Heaven is innocence and mirth. Day is the mastery of great problems, the focusing of long-trained ideas, until the light of reason and wisdom bursts into the consciousness with a rapture of awe and love to Him who leads them silently along. Day is the comprehension and use of new, unflagging powers which fail and dim not, neither are weary nor of weight. Day is sight, clear as crystal and piercing to infinite depths, or following to its inmost

As It is to Be

intricate curve the ear of an insect too small to be seen beneath the material microscope. Day is the exercise of ranges of emotion and sense indescribable to you, but ever increasing in value and delicacy, while never losing strength and variety. Make up one day on earth with only one of these added powers, and you would declare life too poor a thing to resume without it.

“Rest in peace, little child, and ask no more. We have striven to give you some hint of your duty to yourself and to others. Open wide the door and ask them in. If they will receive, give freely. If they will not receive, pray for them.

“We bid you farewell for the present, and trust to your growing judgment the time of our reunion.”

THE VOICES.

The Bronze Buddha

A MYSTERY

BY CORA LINN DANIELS

Author of "As It Is To Be," "Sardia," etc.

12mo. Decorated cloth. \$1.50

Of surpassing interest. — *Boston Globe.*

In this remarkable novel the combination of the most extraordinary mysticism of the Orient with the modern progress of the Occident gives opportunity for bringing out contrasts of character in a most fascinating manner.

The author has caught the art of deepening the interest of readers with every page. — *Minneapolis Journal.*

A wonderfully attractive story, in characters and plot. — *Chicago Inter-Ocean.*

An interesting story . . . presents vivid and startling contrasts. — *Washington Star.*

The interest is admirably sustained, and the characters are drawn with discrimination and true to life. — *Cambridge Tribune.*

The reader's interest is held from the first page to the last in fascinated attention. — LILIAN WHITING, in *Chicago Inter-Ocean.*

LITTLE, BROWN, & CO., *Publishers*
254 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON, MASS.

H 84 82



Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Dec. 2004

Preservation Technologies
A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111



FEB 82

N. MANCHESTER,
INDIANA 46962



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 013 541 633 2

